

Alexander the Great and the East

History, Art, Tradition

Edited by
Krzysztof Nawotka
and Agnieszka Wojciechowska

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Altertumswissenschaftliche Abhandlungen

Contributions to the Study of Ancient World Cultures 103

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Alexander the Great and the East: History, Art, Tradition: An Introduction

Krzysztof Nawotka (Wrocław) and Agnieszka Wojciechowska (Wrocław)

This volume presents final versions of papers read at a conference in Wrocław on 12–14 September 2013. It was the second in a series of scholarly meetings on Alexander the Great, initiated in November 2011 by Volker Grieb of Hamburg, Krzysztof Nawotka and Agnieszka Wojciechowska of Wrocław, with a conference “Alexander the Great and Egypt: History, Art, Tradition”. In 2014 it was followed by “Historiography of Alexander the Great” and in 2015 by “Alexander Romance: History and Literature” co-organized by Richard Stoneman of Exeter. All these conferences were well-attended and the acts of the first in the series appeared in 2014 as *Philippika* 74.

Alexander left Macedonia in the early Spring of 334 BC, less than two years in his rule, to cross to Asia in May 334 BC, never to return to Europe. In fact we do not know whether he ever intended to come back. Indeed, classical and oriental evidence alike show Alexander’s efforts to assume trappings of the Achaemenid monarchy both in political practice of taxation, appointments of satraps, usage of oriental troops and image-building. This, traditionally called, Orientalizing policy of Alexander manifested itself in his proclamation as King of Asia at the battlefield of Gaugamela, to culminate in the so-called proskynesis affair and to be sealed by mass wedding of Susa and Alexander’s decision to select Babylon as his primary residence, just as late Achaemenids did. Having in mind that most of Alexander’s life career and his epic conquests evolved in the East, there is an ample justification for publishing a volume “Alexander the Great and the East”. For all recent progress in the field of Egyptian and Middle Eastern studies, the eastern campaigns of Alexander and his rule in Asia still have to be approached primarily through the study of classical sources which are the only contiguous accounts of Alexander’s history. No surprise therefore that Alexander historians and other Western authors are the primary research focus of most papers included in this volume. Nevertheless the organizers of the conference tried to encourage papers broadening the approach to Alexander beyond Arrian, Plutarch and the Vulgate authors as much as possible, both in selection of themes and in study of non-classical evidence.

This approach proved very successful in the first Wrocław Alexander the Great conference during which a number of Egyptian evidence to the reign of Alexander in Egypt was presented and analyzed, including those on the widely discussed issue of his usage of all five pharaonic names, or of his pharaonic coronation or his building program in Egypt. But not all lands in the East have produced contemporary evidence equal in size and importance to that from Egypt. Outside of Egypt most of usable written evidence in the East comes from Mesopotamia and for this reason alone this land has to be a focus of any serious study of Alexander in the East. Another way of coping with lack of meaningful contemporary

evidence is study of late and even medieval sources which still might be of use in reconstructing of historical geography and ideology of the age of Alexander.

There is a growing perception in modern scholarship, accentuated also in a number of papers read at the first Wrocław Alexander the Great conference, of the Second Persian Rule in Egypt as of a time of military occupation contested by Egyptian elite whose members were referring to the Persians with pejorative expression “foreigners/aliens”. It thus separated two periods of legitimacy of power in Egypt: this under the last native XXX dynasty and that under Alexander and his Macedonian successors. The issue of continuity of the legitimate Egyptian rule under the Macedonians pharaohs is further investigated in two papers in this volume. Ivan Ladynin analysis a statuette, now lost (?) or kept in an undisclosed location, with a dedicatory inscription set up by a prince, the son of Nectanebo, probably of Nectanebo II, the last native pharaoh, happily returned to Egypt from foreign lands. The discrete elements of his inscription indicate, Ladynin shows, that the son of Nectanebo stayed abroad with a benevolent king, in all probability Alexander the Great. Nothing indicates that he participated in Alexander’s wars, more likely paying a visit at his court in Asia and seeking his support for some Egyptian cause. His inscription seems to draw a fine line between the Egyptian elite enjoying benevolence of Alexander the king of Egypt and their reluctance to acknowledge him as a full *ritual* pharaoh as in the inscription of the son of Nectanebo Alexander is never referred to quite the same way the father of the dedicant would have been.

Nectanebo II is the key figure of the so-called Egyptian logos of the *Alexander Romance* in which he moves from Memphis to Pella to seduce Olympias and to sire Alexander. With the general agreement that the story is early Hellenistic, Krzysztof Nawotka and Agnieszka Wojciechowska investigate when the interest in Nectanebo was born in Macedonian-ruled Egypt, having in mind a very strong case for the Ptolemaic origin of his cult as the divine falcon. But the gist of the Nectanebo story in the *Alexander Romance* is unmistakably Egyptian and unlikely to have been devised in the Greco-Macedonian environment: his magical power is deeply rooted in traditional Egyptian tales and its presence in the story reflects real interests of the historic Nectanebo II in magic. And the seduction of Olympias is but a Greek rendition of the Egyptian royal sacred marriage. What is most astonishing, however, is that Alexander seems to have treaded in the footsteps of Nectanebo not only in the *Alexander Romance* but also in the pronounced animal cult and in his construction projects in Egyptian temples. Thus, Nawotka and Wojciechowska show, Alexander and his Egyptian advisors took an effort to obliterate the Persian rule and to present the new king as the direct successor to Nectanebo II.

The greatest physical imprint of Alexander in Egypt is the city named after him, even if the actual construction in Rhakotis barely started during Alexander’s short sojourn. Alexandria, as it was known to later generation, is the product of the enormous building effort of first Ptolemies but, Adam Łukaszewicz argues, according to the original blueprint from the age of Alexander which included also the island of Pharos, at that time just off-shore of Alexandria’s harbor and now a part of it. Pharos is of course best known as the site of the famous lighthouse regularly featured among the Wonders of the World. Łukaszewicz makes the case for beginning of the construction of the lighthouse by Kleomenes of Naucratis, most probably on orders of Alexander, in this case leaving to Ptolemy I or to his son the completion of the building, while the alleged architect Sostratos of Knidos was

responsible only for putting up the final embellishment of the lighthouse, the statues of the king. He shows the triple function of the Pharos tower, all probably belonging to the original plan of Alexander: lighthouse, watchtower guarding the harbor of Alexandria and the focal point of the fire telegraph, known to us only from a mid-third c. BC papyrus, but almost certainly implemented from an Achaemenid template.

Alexandria in or near Egypt proved the most successful of all real or attributed foundations of Alexander, both as the capital city of the Ptolemies and a centre of arts and commerce. Starting from her research on the Hellenistic vitreous ware in the Sandwich Gold-Glass technique, Giulia Cesarin investigates the motive of hunting iconography in Hellenistic art. She notices a strong, if circumstantial Alexandrian connection of the scene of a young horseman dressed in *kausia* and hunting big game with a spear. Its origin is related to the Macedonian art, best represented by the hunting scene (of Alexander?) on the façade of the Tomb II in Vergina. Cesarin shows its transformation in the Greco-Egyptian milieu of Alexandria.

The dearth of contemporary Greek sources on Alexander necessitates study of any evidence, no matter how incomplete and ambiguous. A broken stele containing the Athenian honorific decree (*IG II² 356*) of 327/6 BC for a descendant of Pharnabazus and Artabazus is the case in point. The name of the honorand is usually restored as Memnon, with an almost universal agreement that it is a member of family of the famous mercenary general Memnon of Rhodes. But, following upon a new restoration of S. Lambert, Eduard Rung, shows new possibility of historical interpretation of the decree and its geopolitical context. To him no Memnon was ever mentioned as honorand and the Athenians passed this decree for Thymondas son of Mentor. In Rung's tentative interpretation Thymondas earned the praises having successfully negotiated release of Athenian mercenary soldiers and envoys from Alexander's captivity.

Alexander's expedition to Asia was first of all a military endeavor although few contributors to this volume would be inclined to reduce its history to strictly military matters, least of all not in the modern, seemingly rational understanding of war making. But even now, for all logistical and intelligence sophistication the very outcome of many military operations is largely unforeseeable. In ancient warfare a universal answer to the powerful factor of unpredictability was ascertaining future through divination. Krzysztof Ulanowski looks from this point of view at campaigns of conquest of rulers of Neo-Assyrian Kingdom and of Alexander. His aim is not to prove direct influence of the Assyrian divination on that of the Greeks and Macedonians of the fourth c. BC, but to show basic, universal approach to warfare from the Assyrian empire to that of Alexander, despite all differences, the greatest being perhaps the very nature of Assyrian divination: with a highly structured hierarchy of experts drawing on extensive specialized literature devoted to discreet disciplines. Even if nothing betrays a similar structure of Greek seers serving Alexander, the divinatory techniques and questions were similar to those applied in Neo-Assyrian armies.

With every new fourth c. BC cuneiform tablet published grows our understanding of the Babylonian society of the age when the Achaemenid kings were replaced by Alexander on the throne of Babylon. And since some cuneiform documents, especially Astronomical Diaries, supply precise dates and data unobtainable in classical sources, to mention only the daily date of the battle of Gaugamela, there is the constant trend towards identifying in Babylonian sources direct corroboration of facts of the age of Alexander known from Greek

and Roman authors. A case in point, Micah Ross shows, is the van der Spek's identification of a Chaldaean Belephantes known from Diodorus with a Babylonian astronomer Bēl-aplaidin attested in cuneiform texts of the age of Alexander. However attractive, this hypothesis is untenable on linguistic grounds and Diodorus' Belephantes may not be a name but a misread Babylonian priestly title. Ross further points to the danger of overenthusiastic interpretation of episodes of the last months of Alexander's life: the Babylonian Omen Episode and the Substitute King ritual. Their description in classical sources, he shows, is at odds with the standard Mesopotamian practice known from cuneiform tablets. In the Spring of 323 BC, Ross shows, Alexander received an astrological warning from his Babylonian scholars and it did affect his behavior, although the details transmitted by classical authors were edited post eventum to amplify the impact of omens made apparent only after Alexander's death.

The episode of a stranger on Alexander's throne in Babylon placed by classical authors among omens and signs predicting the king's death is now commonly interpreted as the Substitute King ritual, i.e. not as an omen but as a release ritual set in motion in response to an earlier grave warning provided by a real omen. This interpretation, grounded in studies of Babylonian omens and rituals, and generally accepted by Assyriologists and a number of classical scholars has some weakness from the Assyriological point of view too, as indicated by the paper of Micah Ross. Robin Lane Fox questions this interpretation entirely, reversing the now generally accepted scholarly approach which gives preference to sources grounded in Babylonian culture and which is prone to blame Western accounts for lack of precision or misunderstanding of the events in Babylon in the Spring of 323 BC. The story, as we know it from Diodorus, Plutarch and Arrian, is multilayered and distorted with the increased component of the miraculous. The first layer, however, Lane Fox asserts, is based on the account of a reliable eye-witness, Aristobulos, but later it was tainted with a dim reflection of the substitute king tradition known to Cleitarchus. So, in Lane Fox' interpretation based on close reading of classical sources, the famous episode can be read as an account of an accident aggravated by Alexander's growing suspicion of plots surrounding him which necessitated execution of the poor interloper who sat on the king's throne, made temporarily vacant by Alexander on account of his other activities.

Alexander's campaigns further east were fought in the land little known to most ancient authors and never visited by those whose accounts of his rule constitute the core of our source bases. The outcome of this to a modern scholar is that geography of ancient Central Asia and Alexander's movements within Baktria and Sogdiana has always been a puzzle. It is created, Jeffrey Lerner shows, by a number of intersecting factors: names of rivers and towns, particularly prone to misspelling by medieval scribes unfamiliar with geography, overzealous emendations proposed by modern editors and the difficulty in identifying ancient toponyms with rivers and places on modern maps. Archaeology rarely provides conclusive evidence on Alexander's campaigns in Central Asia too, since safe date for Hellenistic pottery and other diagnostic materials are early Seleucid at the earliest. Murky geographical knowledge among Alexander historians and numerous mistakes and misguided simplifications and corrections in Ptolemy's *Geography* affect our understanding of Alexander's campaign in 329 and 328 BC. Lerner's detailed analysis of various recent attempts at pinpointing Alexander's route through Baktria and Sogdiana proves how much caution needs to be applied in charting his movements through Central Asia.

One episode in Alexander's campaigns in Baktria or Sogdiana, whose geography is as imprecise as any other's and whose meaning has baffled scholars is the massacre of Branchidai. Olga Kubica attempts to find out who they were and to gauge their guilt in a mock trial. Kubica reminds the reader that Alexander's deed, an act of genocide by our standards, was almost universally construed in ancient sources as just punishment, even if this explanation was no more than a cover up absolving Alexander from the charge of inadequate control of his troops, guilty of massacre. But, Kubica shows, Branchidai did not disappear completely: there are epigraphic traces of their survival in Central Asia a few hundred years after Alexander, while in Asia Minor divinatory practices harking back to their tradition are attested as late as the fourth c. AD.

Although Alexander's conquests ended at the Hyphasis and in modern geographical terminology he barely made an inroad into India, serious scholars and history enthusiasts have long been asking questions about his real and possible relations with the great nation east of India, China of the Warring States period. Gościwit Malinowski notices that in many eastern versions of the *Alexander Romance* Alexander conducts a peaceful conquest of China. But this is certainly a literary fiction, introduced much later than the age of Alexander, long after diplomatic contacts between China and the Roman empire had been established under Marcus Aurelius. Even if contacts, certainly not limited to trade in goods, between India and China existed in the age of Alexander, no evidence proves the knowledge of China at the court of Alexander, nor did his conquest found any reflection in Chinese sources.

To many Alexander is also and to some mostly a literary figure. Guendalina Taietti investigates parallel handling of motives in Herodotus and among Alexander historians, treated as a notional unity. She finds some remarkable parallels between the Herodotean image of the Persian king and the representation of Alexander in later authors, e.g. in terms of conquests or in bold engineering feats, but also in negative traits. On poignant example is the topical representations of tyrants, with their excessive longing on which the famed *pothos* of Alexander certainly bordered. In Taietti's analysis some other principal characters in Alexander's historians were re-modeled to fit the Herodotean patterns; the most convincing case to be made for Parmenion, a tragic-warner, not unlike Croesus or Artabanus. Alexander historians, Taietti shows, freely borrowed story patterns from Herodotus which only helped them to promote their agenda in presenting the portrait of Alexander, both modelled on the Herodotean Persian King and being its reversal.

The idealized portrait of Alexander could and did serve non-literary purpose too. Sabine Müller demonstrates how the idealized representation of Alexander translated into the language of power of Ptolemy, in his own words the best friend of Alexander, with the unique legitimation to rule, and how this inherited friendship stayed at the core of the Ptolemaic ideology of power. Alexander features strongly, if often indirectly, in epigrams of an Alexandrian poet Poseidippos of Pella, now accessible thanks to a Milan papyrus. His learned epigrams, Müller shows, refer to Alexander's victories by allusions to defeated Persian kings or to objects brought from the most distant parts of the world or through Panhellenic motifs. By blending elements of Alexander's legends known from earlier sources with symbols of the Ptolemaic ideology, Poseidippos contributed to building legitimacy of the Ptolemies as successors to Alexander.

Image making and *topoi* were as much preserve of poetry as of "serious" rhetorical history, whose prime representative was Curtius Rufus, studied in this volume by Igor Yakubovitch. Curtius, in Herodotean ethnographic tradition, acted at the crossroads of history and geography, satisfying his readers curiosity for exotic places in which Alexander fought his wars, and indeed for *mirabilia*, things utterly out of the ordinary. For all its informative *cum* entertaining qualities Curtius' ethnogeography was, Yakubovitch shows, an element of his Roman ideological agenda. This included moral judgement on luxury, orientalizing of Alexander and weakening of *mos maiorum*. Thus the conquest of the East is in Yakubovitch's reading of Curtius the prelude only to the moral downfall of Alexander caused by assimilation to lower standards represented by the topical Oriental reversion of (conservative Roman) standards.

In a way for the Western, Roman in particular, reader, the ultimate Orient is India. Igor Yakubovitch shows it on many examples derived from Curtius and Christian Djurslev comes back to this idea, albeit from a different angle anchored in the mythological exploits of Dionysus in Nonnus' *Dionysiaca*. By the time it was composed similarities between two sons of Zeus and conquerors of India, Dionysus and Alexander, were a commonplace in Hellenistic and Roman literature. Nonnus, Djurslev shows, exploits these similarities to a very considerable degrees, modelling his Dionysus on Alexander, both in outward appearance (horns), epithets, general line of exploits and travels, close parallels in battle description. Thus the *Dionysiaca* share in the late-antique revival of Alexander, greatly contributing to mythologizing the Conqueror.

Born Macedonian, educated in the best of classical Greek tradition and the conqueror of the East: Alexander acted within diverse cultures which were, nevertheless, never totally apart, influencing each other throughout most of the classical age. Hence a handful of papers in this volume looks at the intersection of cultures and at the persona of Alexander in this variegated world. The nature of our sources determine that the conqueror of the East is approached here mostly in the Greek context. Agnieszka Fulińska looks at Alexander's ancestral Macedonia as the place of criss-crossing cultural influence. Although kings of Macedonia, at least in the account of Herodotus, strove to be seen as members of the wider Greek world, their land shared a number of distinct cultural features, from monarchy, to the role of women in society, to drinking unmixed wine, with the neighbouring Thrace and Persia rather than with mainstream Greece. Archaeology makes us appreciate depth and breadth of Persian influence in Macedonian art and funerary architecture in the fourth c. BC. Much of this results from the Achaemenid policy of integration of elites of subject lands with the imperial aristocracy. The same policy, Fulińska concludes, albeit on the post-haste rate, can be seen in the orientalizing policy of Alexander, some tenets of it Alexander brought to his new empire from the Persian-influenced Macedonia.

The much maligned orientalizing policy of Alexander first came to the fore during the campaign in Bactria and Sogdiana. In this volume Dan-Tudor Ionescu studies its context and outcome for Alexander's image, principally on example of the proskynesis affair. The intellectual debate on tradition and proskynesis was won by Callisthenes, who, however, lost his position at Alexander's court, Ionescu shows, to the faction of unscrupulous courtiers and officers. The intellectual influence of his historical writing is felt through next generations of historians, thanks to the intermediary of Cleitarchus.

The controversy over proskynesis, as amply evidenced by Ionescu, arose from the Greek and Macedonian misunderstanding of the Eastern ceremonial bow as a sign of the divine cult of the living man. In a way it belongs to the broader issue of divinity of Alexander, some scholar thinks imposed by the king on the Greeks during his stay in the East. Przemysław Siekierka assesses in this volume the question of Alexander's divinity in Athens, the only place in the Greek world whose evidence from the age of Alexander make in-depth study of this issue viable. Literary sources on Alexander's cult in Athens acquire clarity only when confronted with epigraphic evidence which explain the precise meanings of terminology the authors may have applied. There is no doubt, Siekierka shows, that a motion for deifying Alexander was tabled by Demades in the Athenian assembly in 324 BC. Nothing, however, proves that it carried the day: Alexander was never a god in Athens and probably also not in Sparta, although he received divine honours among the Greeks in Asia.

A spectacular aspect of cultural or political only Hellenization of Macedonia was the royal promotion of theatre, begun with Archelaus hosting Euripides at the latest. Agnieszka Kotlińska-Toma acknowledges Alexander's consummate knowledge of drama and gathers evidence for his patronage of stage performance. But it was more to the theatre than to provide entertainment to Alexander's troops in Asia, no matter how important this was for soldiers' morale. Kotlińska-Toma notices also a lesser known activity of actors in the age of Alexander: diplomatic and intelligence missions performed by them in the king's service. Nothing perhaps testify more vividly to the importance Alexander attributed to theatre than his sponsorship, but rather not his authorship, Kotlińska-Toma shows, of the satyr play *Agen* written and performed to mock the fugitive treasurer Harpalus and thus to diffuse the tension created in Alexander's empire by the prolonged affair of Harpalus.

Alexander is among best the established heroes of various cultural traditions in Asia and he owns this success to the enormous popularity of the *Alexander Romance* which is the ultimate source of most renditions of Alexander in the East. Aleksandra Szalc notices that Persia is a conspicuous exception to this rule with the original Zoroastrian tradition on Alexander, preceding Ps.-Callisthenes by hundreds of years, hostile to the conqueror of the Achaemenid empire. The second Iranian tradition, that of the national epic, is firmly grounded in the *Alexander Romance*, adopting Alexander to the Achaemenid dynasty. This new tradition of the Iranian epic poetry is incredibly complex, Szalc shows, with a mixture of motifs and episodes borrowed from the Syriac version of the *Alexander Romance*, odd Hellenistic influences, Islamic ideology which makes Alexander destroy fire temples, and even with the authentic Indian lore.

Arabic manuscripts now kept in Istanbul contain another branch of tradition of Alexander, his purported correspondence with Aristotle, arranged in form of an epistolary novel. Emily Cottrell studies authorship, origin and composition of this collection, ultimately derived from Greek collections of spurious letters of Alexander and Aristotle referred to by late antiquity authors. Some of them crept into later tradition of the *Alexander Romance* too but the epistolary novel known in Arabic is, Cottrell shows, largely independent of Ps.-Callisthenes and it focuses on Aristotle rather than on Alexander. The epistolary novel, in its original form, is dated by Cottrell to the Umayyad court of the first half of the eighth c. (under Caliph Hishām).

Already in the earliest Greek version of the *Alexander Romance* (ms. A) Alexander excels so much as warrior as a trickster and this aspect of his persona grows with a develop-

ment of his medieval legends. Richard Stoneman investigates the miraculous and cunning in Arabic and Persian versions of the *Alexander Romance* and other Alexander legends in the Muslim world. Muslim Alexander legends, he shows, were particularly prone to emphasize his trickster qualities and his clever inventions, including a diving bell or numerous miraculous mirrors (all-seeing, weapon etc.), because of Alexander's association with Aristotle, himself credited for wisdom and various inventions. In fact the Muslim fascination with mirrors reflects, often indirectly, Plato and Neoplatonic works which filtered to Sufi thinking, while in the mirror stories Alexander is often a figure of a (Muslim) mystic.

In a way an offshoot of the Arabic tradition of Alexander is the significant part of the Hebrew tradition: this based on the Hebrew *Alexander Romance*, itself a translation from the unknown to us Arabic version of the *Romance*. Again, Alexander is in it not so much a historical figure as a paradigm of the imperfect worldly wisdom. Aleksandra Klęczar studies in the volume the concept of wisdom, Greek in Jewish, in a branch of the Hebrew tradition of the *Alexander Romance*. Alexander is here, as in the Jewish tradition in general, a chosen king, endowed with wisdom. It, however, fails him on some occasions, being imperfect, since perfect is only the wisdom of God.

Faced with the enormous output on Alexander the Great, every paper, no matter how much source orientated, has to deal with conflicting opinions of other scholars. Josef Wiesehöfer studies views and attitudes of German ancient historians to Alexander's alleged policy of unity of mankind, alternatively called "policy of fusion". The topic was no less significant in 1933-1945 than it is now, more for ideological than scholarly reasons. It came to the fore, Wiesehöfer shows, as a result of the departure from the positivistic approach to history in the 1920ies, and with the emphasis on the role in history of what was then called "race", and because of the perceived need to appreciate the utilitarian role of ancient history for modern society. This way of thinking, with its glorification of Aryan/Indoeuropean "race", was typical of but not limited to openly Nazi-leaning German intellectuals. The openly pro-Nazi ancient historians F. Schachermeyr and H. Berve extolled virtues of the Aryan race of Macedonians and Persians against the danger of polluting their blood by mixing with inferior Semitic people. The defeat of the Nazi regime in 1945 forced even its most dedicated followers in the scholarly world to tone down their approach but the overall perspective did not change as much as one might expect until the 1970ies. In Wiesehöfer's sober assessment, those among German Alexander historians who stayed closest to the source-critical approach, largely free of ideology, were emigre scholars V. Ehrenberg and E. Badian.

An Egyptian Prince at Alexander's Court at Asia? A New Interpretation for the Evidence of the Statuette of the Son of Nectanebo II

Ivan A. Ladynin (Moscow)

A question that should necessarily arise at addressing the problem of the Egypto-Hellenic interrelations under Alexander the Great is that of direct contacts between the Egyptians, on one side, and the Greeks and Macedonians, including their leader, on the other side. The fact of such contacts during the stay of Alexander in Egypt and later on, when the Macedonian administration of the country was adjusted is beyond doubts. However, the relevant classical sources do not give us details of such contacts and hardly mention the personalities involved in them, with the exception of the most important (like Cleomenes of Naucratis).¹ It is generally believed that the Egyptian sources are not much better: a number of them reflect the Egyptian reaction to the Macedonian conquest of the East,² some mention in traditional expressions the praises from the Satrap Ptolemy to members of Egyptian elite,³ but the picture they form equally lacks in details. The paucity of evidence on this

- 1 See on this personality: J. SEIBERT, *Untersuchungen zur Geschichte Ptolemaios' I.*, Munich 1969, 39–51; J. SEIBERT, *Alexander der Große*, Darmstadt 1972, 125–126 (an overview of earlier research); J. VOGT, “Kleomenes aus Naukratis - Herr von Ägypten”, *Chiron* 1 (1971), 153–157; J. SEIBERT, “Nochmals zu Kleomenes von Naukratis”, *Chiron* 2 (1972), 99–102; G. LE RIDER, “Cléomène de Naucratis”, *BCH* 121 (1997), 71–93; W. HECKEL, *Who Was Who in the Age of Alexander the Great? Prosopography of Alexander's Empire*, Malden/Oxford 2006, 88–89; S. BURSTEIN, “Alexander's Organization of Egypt: A Note on the Career of Cleomenes of Naucratis”, in: T. Howe and J. Reames (eds.), *Macedonian Legacies: Papers on Macedonian Culture and History in Honor of Eugene N. Borza*, Claremont 2009, 183–194.
- 2 See the Stela of Naples (National Archaeological Museum of Naples, no. 1035) on the Macedonian advance in Asia (probably, in Iran: I. LADYNIN, “An Egyptian Priestly Corporation at Iran: A Possible Case of “Forced Mobility” on the Eve of the Macedonian Conquest”, in: E. Olshausen and V. Sauer (eds.), *Akten des 11. Internationalen Kolloquiums zur Historischen Geographie des Altertums „Mobilität in den Kulturen der antiken Welt“* (forthcoming): “You (the god Herishef of Herakleopolis) protected me (the dignitary Somtutefnakht) in the combat of Hau-nebu (i.e. the Macedonians and the Greeks) after you overthrew Asia: they killed multitude (lit. ‘million’) at my sides (but) one's (lit. ‘his’) hand did not arise against me” (ll. 10–11: *mk.n.k wi m 'h3 n h3w-nbw(t) dr hsf.n.k Stt sm3.zn hh m-gswy.i n f3 'f r.i*; *Urk.* II 4.3–6; O. PERDU, “Le monument de Samtutefnakht à Naples”, *REgypt* 36 (1985), 103); the Great Autobiographical Inscription from the tomb of Petosiris at Tuna el-Gebel, the passage to be quoted below (see our note 27).
- 3 See the Great Autobiographical Inscription from the tomb of Petosiris at Tuna el-Gebel: “(I) was praised by the ruler of Egypt, I was beloved by his courtiers” (col. 87: *iw hs(i) hr hq3 nw Kmt iw mr.i hr sny.f*; G. LEFEBVRE, *Le tombeau de Petosiris*, I: *Description*, Cairo 1923, 144; II: *Les texts*, Cairo 1923, 59; see on the identity of the “ruler of Egypt” with Alexander the Great: B. MENU, “Le tombeau de Pétosiris (4): Le souverain de l'Égypte”, *BIAO* 98 (1998), 250–251; W. HUB, *Der makedonische König und die ägyptischen Priester: Studien zur Geschichte des ptolemäischen Ägypten*, Stuttgart 1994, 137–138; with

aspect has led some scholars not only to losing it from their sight but even to reconstructing it up to their fantasy: thus, the father-founder of the Soviet Egyptology V. V. Struve presented a detailed and perfectly arbitrary story of Manetho as Alexander's advisor in returning to their home places Egyptian sacred objects once lost to Persians.⁴ Sure, fantasies like that cannot make up for the absence of real information; and we will hardly ever have a look at the details of the contacts between the Egyptians and the new foreign masters of their country at the start of the Hellenism. It seems, however, there is a possibility to detect some quite important details of this kind in some hieroglyphic sources, which have come to the knowledge of the scholars quite long ago.

One of these sources that we are going to address is the statuette of the elder son of Nectanebo II – the last Pharaoh of Dynasty XXX who held Egypt before the second Persian conquest.⁵ This object belonged to the collections of Dikran Kelekian and Arakel-pasha Nubar in 1930–1940s; its present location is not known. The object is made of basalt rather well; it is not high (originally, probably, not more than 70 cm.) and considerably damaged; the surface and the sides of its dorsal pillar bear fragments of hieroglyphic inscriptions. Unfortunately, these fragments did not preserve the name of the prince. Judging from them, the statuette might originate from Behbeit el-Hagar (Iseum; Egyptian *Hbyr*), the cult centre at the Nile Delta, which was prominent in the religious policy of Dynasty XXX;⁶ probably,

the Satrap Ptolemy: J. GORRE, *Les relations du clergé égyptien et des Lagides d'après les sources privées*, Leuven 2009, 188–189; the latter view seems more likely due to the simple fact that the praise from the “ruler of Egypt” to Petosiris seems to be real, which can hardly be true if it were Alexander who stayed at Egypt quite shortly and did not visit Hermopolis); the inscription on the dorsal pillar of the anonymous statue from Baklia (the National Museum of Carthage, Tunis, no 883.1; A. ZIVIE, *Hermopolis et le nome de l'Ibis: Recherche sur la province du Dieu Thot en Basse Égypte*, I: *Introduction et inventaire chronologique des sources*, Cairo 1975, 149–154; the inscription is preserved rather poorly but probably attests a visit of the Satrap Ptolemy in early 300s BC to Baklia, with paying honours to a local priest, the anonymous owner of the statue); the inscription on the dorsal pillar of the anonymous statue from Memphis (Vienna, *Ägyptische Sammlung*, 20: “Thus, in the time of Hau<-nebu> I was summoned by the ruler of Beloved Land, (as) he loved me (and) he knew the advices that [I] gave” (cols. 3–4: *is m rk h3w<-nbw> nis.tw r.i in hq3 t3{w}-mry mr.nf wi rh.nf shrw rdi[.n.i]*; E. ROGGE, *Statuen der Spätzeit (750- ca. 300 v. Chr.)*, Mainz 1992, 145–152; on the identity of the “ruler of Beloved Land” to the Satrap Ptolemy see: PH. DERCHAIN, *Les impondérables de l'héllénisation*, Brussels 2000, 69, n. 16).

- 4 B.B. СТРУВЕ, *Манефон и его время* (W. STRUVE, *Manetho and his Time*), St. Petersburg 2003, 99–101.
- 5 J. CAPART, “Un général, fils de Nekhthorhebet”, *CRAI* 91 (1947), 272–276; J.-J. CLÈRE, “Une statuette du fils aîné du roi Nectanabô”, *REgypt* 6 (1951), 135–156, pl. 1 (the history and the description of the artifact are given according to this publication); see prosopographical notes on the owner of the statue: P. CHEVEREAU, *Prosopographie des cadres militaires égyptiens de Basse Époque*, Paris 1985, 155–156 (doc. 229); GORRE, *Rélations* (n. 3), 378–380 (no. 74).
- 6 See on the site: P. MONTET, *Géographie de l'Égypte ancienne*, I: *To-mehou*, Paris 1957, 107; W. HELCK, *Die altägyptische Gaue*, Wiesbaden 1972, 180–181; C. FAVARD-MEEKS, “The Present State of the Site of Behbeit el-Hagar”, *British Museum Studies in Ancient Egypt and Sudan* 3 (2002), 1–11 (URL: <http://www.thebritishmuseum.ac.uk/egyptian/bmsaes/issue3/favardmEEKS.html>); on the building activities of Nectanebo II there: H. JENNI, “Die architektonische Hinterlassenschaft Nektanebos' II”, in: H. Jenni, *Die Dekoration des Chnumtempels auf Elephantine durch Nektanebos II*, Mainz 1998, 87–89; C. FAVARD-MEEKS, “Les constructions de Nectanébo II à Behbeit el-Hagara”, in: N. Kloth, K. Martin and E. Pardey (eds.), *Es werde niedergelegt als Schriftstück: Festschrift für Hartwig Altenmüller z65. Geburtstag*, Hamburg 2003, 97–108.

The statement to be considered in the present article is found in col. 4 of the fragment on the left side of the dorsal pillar, which must have belonged to the autobiography of the son of Nectanebo II. The only phrase preserved of the biographical text properly spoken reads as follows:



“(When) I was among the foreigners she (the goddess Isis) rose my place in the heart of their ruler, she brought me (back) in Egypt.”⁹

We can see that the whereabouts of Nectanebo's son at a certain period of his life is described with the word-combination *imtyw ḥ3st(y)w*; the meaning of the preposition *imtyw* used in it is "between, among".¹³ In the Ptolemaic time this preposition can be sometimes used as an equivalent to the preposition *m* "in";¹⁴ but such use presumes rather that it would

14 P. WILSON, *A Ptolemaic Lexikon: A Lexicographical Study of the Texts in the Temple of Edfu*, Leuven 1997, 68–69.

introduce a noun in the singular form.¹⁵ In the passage analyzed the plural form introduced with this preposition led scholars to postulate for it its basic meaning “between”.¹⁶ It should be said that this preposition is rather rare, it appears in the texts of this objects only once, and its use is likely to have some specific motivation.

The second component of this word-combination, *i.e.* the noun in the plural form *ḥ3st(y)w* – was interpreted by the students of the text namely as “foreigners”,¹⁷ and not as “foreign countries, mountain-lands”,¹⁸ which would not be impossible in the case of this hieroglyphic writing. Though the reasons for such interpretations have not been formulated by either scholar, they seem obvious enough. One of them is the basic meaning of the preposition *imytw*: while the feasibility of the word-combination “among foreign countries”, “between foreign countries” (but, at the same time, not within either of them!) can be questioned, the meaning “between, among foreigners” is beyond reasonable doubt. Besides, the hieroglyphic texts of the early Macedonian time give a number of examples of this word namely in the meaning “foreigners” (see below). At the same time, the use of this word in the present case gives ground to reflection: to designate the former Achaemenian empire the compilers of early Hellenistic hieroglyphic texts used the term *Stt* (“Asia”), which denoted a vast territory and not a people and was in fact applied throughout the First Millennium BC to the interregional empires of the Near East¹⁹ (for instance, in the autobiography of Somtutefnakht it was used twice in the description of his stay at the Achaemenian empire).²⁰ Certainly, it cannot be excluded that the Achaemenian empire could be somehow denoted with the help of a designation of a certain group of people; however, the very use of the preposition *imytw* as well as its uniqueness in the text suggests that this designation in the plural form was chosen deliberately, in order to convey a narrower and a more specific meaning than a location in a country.

It is certainly worth checking what examples of the term *ḥ3st(y)w* as a denotation of population outside Egypt can be found in the hieroglyphic texts of the early Hellenistic time. The dignitary Djed-Hor from Athribis said in his inscriptions, when enumerating his

15 P. Wilson indicated a case, in which, in her idea, *imytw* in the meaning “in” introduces a plural form (*Edfou* II 96.10: [ʿnh] *Hr rʿ m Kmt iʿh imytw Sttyw* “Be alive Horus, sun in Egypt, moon in Asia”; WILSON, *Ptolemaic* (n. 14), 68). There is, however, a strong possibility that here the hieroglyphic writing  should be read as *Stt* (“Asia”; *Wb.* IV 348.3) rather than as *Sttyw* (“Asiatics”; *Wb.* IV 348.6). It seems that whenever a non-singular substantive denotes a location after *imytw* the semantic of this preposition in its basic meaning “between, among” comes into play (see the alleged *imytw Sttyw*, that should be literally translated “among Asiatics”; *Edfou* II 21.11–12: *imytw qbhwy* “in Egypt”, lit. “between the two caverns of Kebhu”, cf. WILSON, *Ptolemaic* (n. 14), 1054).

16 CAPART, “Général” (n. 5), 275 (“Quand (j’)étais parmi les étrangers...”); CLERE, “Statuette” (n. 5), 148 (“Alors que j’étais parmi les peuples étrangers...”).

17 *Wb.* II 235–236.

18 *Wb.* II 234–235.

19 I. LADYNIN, “The Near Eastern Empires of the First Millennium B.C. in Terms of Ancient Egyptian Texts: The Name *Stt/Stt*”, in: М. Д. Бухарин (M. D. Bukharin) (ed.), *Scripta antiqua: Вопросы древней истории, филологии, искусства и материальной культуры*, I, Moscow 2011, 128–153.

20 “You (the god Herishef) gave the love of me in the heart of the ruler of Asia” (*Urk.* II. 3.16: *di.k mrt.i m ib n ḥq3 n Stt*); “You protected me in the combat of Hau-nebu after you overthrew Asia” (*Urk.* II. 4.3–4: *mk.n.k wi m ḥ3 n ḥ3w-nbw(t) dr ḥsf.n.k Stt*); PERDU, “Monument” (n. 2), 103, 105–106 (n. ‘i’), 108 (n. ‘r’); cf. on the passage of the Satrap Stela (*Urk.* II 16.14): A. SPALINGER, “The Reign of King Chabbash: An Interpretation”, *ZÄS* 105 (1978), 150.

21 “...the one who made the burial of the falcon there to hide them from distant foreigners” (magic inscription on Djedhor’s healing statue Cairo Museum 46341, ll. 130–131: *ir qrs n p3 bik im r imn zn r h3st(y)w hry(w)*); quoted according to E.J. SHERMAN, “Djedhor the Saviour Statue Base OI 10589”, *JEJ* 67 (1981), 95, comm. ‘u’; this author used a collation specially made by J.P. Allen, which reproduced the text more adequately than the standard edition: E. JĚLINKOVA-REYMOND, *Les inscriptions de la statue guérisseuse de Djed-Her-le-Sauveur*, Cairo 1956, 65–66; the inadequacies of this edition were nevertheless reproduced by GORRE, *Rélatiōns* (n. 3), 354; “I made their burials at the necropolis of Black Bull (the name of the Athribis nome) hidden there from foreigners” (inscription on the pedestal of the statue Oriental Institute, Chicago 10589: *ir.n.i qrs.zn m R3-st3w hr mhyt n K3-kmt sdq(w) im tp-^c h3st(y)w*; SHERMAN, “Djedhor” (n. 21), 88, fig. 3, 90, 95, comm. ‘u’).

22 Biographical inscription on Djedhor’s healing statue Cairo Museum 46341, ll. 23–26, 29: JĚLINKOVA-REYMOND, *Inscriptions* (n. 21), 100–105; C. THIERS, “Civils et militaires dans les temples. Occupation illicite et expulsion”, *BIAO* 95 (1995), 501.

23 CHEVEREAU, *Prosopographie* (n. 5), 156–157 (doc. 156); GORRE, *Rélatiōns* (n. 3), 396–401 (no. 79).

24 Berlin, *Ägyptische Sammlung*, 7; *Urk.* II 24.2.

25 , according to GORRE, *Rélatiōns* (n. 3), 429; standard compendium of the hieroglyphic inscriptions of the Graeco-Roman time transcribes this passage otherwise:  *w3f h3swt/h3st(y)w n nb t3wy* “overcoming the Asiatics for the Lord of Two Lands” (*Urk.* II 25.17). The reading proposed by Gorre is preferable, as the ligature of the signs G43  and D36  is not attested.

26 “I was given (the rank of) *lesonis* (the head of temple economy – I.L.) of Thoth, the lord of Hermopolis, during seven years, while the men of foreign countries were in the rule of Egypt” (inscription 59, l. 2 *rdi n.i imy-r-šn n Dhwty nb Hmnw n rnpt 7 rmt h3swt m hq3 Kmt*; LEFEBVRE, *Tombeau*, I (n. 3), 80; II, 32); “(I made seven years as) the *lesonis* of Thoth, the lord of Hermopolis, making all good things in his house... (while) the men of foreign countries were in the rule of Egypt...” (*ir.n.i rnpt 7 m imy-r-šn n Dhwty nb Hmnw hr ir(t) ht nb nfr m pr.f... rmt h3swt m hq3 B3kt...*; LEFEBVRE, *Tombeau*, I (n. 3), 82; II, 38).

rest; people walked with their hands turned in twofold direction, there was no temple with its serfs, (its) purification-priest being put afar in not knowing (things) happening inside”.²⁷

To cut a long story short, we believe that the start of Petosiris' service must have coincided with the beginning of the Macedonian time, namely with the time of Alexander. This interpretation of the fragment is worth, in fact, a special attention in a separate publication; however, we need now to define its major points in order to proceed with our further argumentation.

The description of chaos in this passage must correspond to the Second Persian Domination merely due to the absence of any other period of comparable hardships at the late fourth century BC in Egypt, to which it would justly apply.²⁸

From the viewpoint of language the clause “I made seven years as a *lesonis* of this god at administering his divine offerings” (*ir.n.i rnpt 7 m imy-r-šn nw ntr pn hr hrp htpw-ntr.f*) can be treated as the rhema of ll. 26–29, while the clauses “(there was) the ruler of foreign countries as the protector of Egypt” (*iw sw hq3 nw h3swt m ndty hr Kmt*) and “there was nothing on its previous place since longtime” (*iw nn ht nb hr st.z hnt(y)*) are rather the subordinate clauses of time-circumstance, thus defining the conditions of rhematized action,²⁹ hence the simultaneity of the events described in them.

The passage in ll. 28–30 can be translated as follows: “...there was nothing on its previous place since longtime, (as) the struggle began in Egypt” (*nn ht nb hr st.z hnt(y) dr w3(w) iw h3 hrp m-hnt B3k3t*). The alternative interpretation, which, in fact, prevails in the

research of the text, treats the writing *dr* () as a preposition introducing the

following verbal form *w3 h3* () and the sign D₂₁³⁰  inscribed below D₃₄

) as the preposition *r*; the entire fragment was thus understood: ...*dr w3 h3 r hrp m-hnt B3k3t* “since the struggle started inside Egypt”.³¹ The construction *w3... r hrp* (lit.

27 Ll. 26–33 (LEFEBVRE, *Tombeau*, I (n. 3), 137; II, 54).

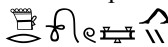
28 At this point we join the view of the following scholars: LEFEBVRE, *Tombeau*, I (n. 3), 10–12; D. DEVAUCHELLE, “Le sentiment anti-perses chez les anciens Égyptiens”, *Transeuphratène* 9 (1995), 78–79; D.B. REDFORD, “Petosiris”, in: D.B. Redford (ed.), *The Oxford Encyclopaedia of Ancient Egypt*, III, Oxford 2000, 39; GORRE, *Rélations* (n. 3), 188–189; for the alternatives see: F.W. VON BISSING, “Die Datierung des griechisch-ägyptischen Grabes von Mellau”, *OLZ* 26 (1923), 1–3; E. OTTO, *Die biographischen Inschriften der ägyptischen Spätzeit*, Leiden 1954, 181, n. 4.

29 GORRE, *Rélations* (n. 3), 187; Å. ENGSHEDEN, *La reconstitution du verbe en égyptien de tradition 400–30 avant J.-C.*, Uppsala 2003, 204.

30 To denote the hieroglyphic signs we use here and below the standard sign-list of A.H. GARDINER (*Egyptian Grammar*, Oxford 1957³, 438–548) and, when it is not sufficient, the indexation of the hieroglyphic-editing program JSesh (URL: <http://jsesh.qenherkhopeshef.org/>).

31 Cf.: LEFEBVRE, *Tombeau*, I (n. 3), 137; OTTO, *Biographischen*, (n. 28), 181; M. LICHTHEIM, *Ancient Egyptian Literature*, III: *The Late Period*, Berkeley/Los Angeles/London 1980, 46; B. MENU, “Le tombeau de Pétosiris: Nouvel examen”, *BIAO* 94 (1994), 323; GORRE, *Rélations* (n. 3), 179; cf. our earlier view: I. LADYNIN, “‘Adversary Hšryš3’: His Name and Deeds According to the Satrap Stela”, *CE* 80 (2005), 106–107.

“fell... into emerging”) seems, however, inelegant and overcomplicated; at the same time, there is the expression *ḏr w3w* (“since longtime”; *Wb.* I 246.4:

 well-attested in the Graeco-Roman time and quite fitting in the writing and the possible meaning of this fragment.³² The natural conclusion to be derived from this interpretation is that the service of Petosiris as *lesonis* and the advent of the foreign ruler contemporary to it *followed* the period of chaos and did not coincide with it in time (though Petosiris certainly faced its consequences).³³

There is a serious reason to identify “the ruler of foreign countries as the protector of Egypt” (l. 28:

 HoA nw xAswt m nDty Hr Kmt) with Alexander even without considering the context of this designation, due to the writing of the word *hq3* “ruler” with the generic determinative

 A_{304E}, i.e. the figure of a seated ruler in double crown. This crown is a neat attribute of the legitimate ritual kingship (see in more details below), while the last Achaemenids were definitely not recognized the ritual kings of Egypt.³⁴ Thus, this writing would hardly apply to one of them and in this case it is more likely to denote Alexander who followed them as a master of the country.

If Alexander is “the ruler of foreign countries as the protector of Egypt” in the Great Autobiographic Inscription and Petosiris’ service as *lesonis* started shortly after the Macedonian advent, then *rmṯ ḥ3swt* in other inscriptions of his tomb must be the followers of Alexander at his invasion to Egypt, i.e. again first of all Graeco-Macedonians, perhaps, added with some Asiatics.

Finally, similar meaning of the word *ḥ3swt* (“foreign countries”) seems to be attested in one of the Egyptian royal names of Philip Arrhidaeus: his Golden Horus’ name is *hq3 ḥ3swt* (“The Ruler of Foreign Countries”),³⁵ i.e. the word-combination that denoted in different epochs the foreign rulers recognized legitimate kings of Egypt but also having a domain outside it;³⁶ in the early Macedonian time it certainly denoted the authority of the Argeadai

32 The omission of several signs as well as the confusion of N₃₁  with Y₁  due to a likeness in their shape are, in fact, not much surprising; and D₂₁  is likely to denote in the texts of the Late Period the pseudo verbal copula *iw* (*Wb.* I 42.12; W. VICICHL, *Dictionnaire étymologique de la langue copte*, Leuven 1983, 37, s. v. e-).

33 Cf. MENU, “Tombeau” (n. 31), 323.

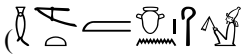
34 These rulers did not build in Egyptian temples (D. ARNOLD, *Temples of the Last Pharaohs*, New York/Oxford 1999, 137); their Egyptian titularies are not attested on contemporary artifacts (J. VON BECKERATH, *Handbuch der ägyptischen Königsnamen*, Mainz 1999², 230–231); they were probably left out of Manetho’s original king’s list of (A.B. LLOYD, “Manetho and the Thirty-First Dynasty”, in: J. Baines (ed.), *Pyramid Studies and Other Essays Presented to I. E. S. Edwards*, London 1988, 154–160); and their image in common Egyptian tradition was perfectly unfavorable (J. SCHWARTZ, “Les conquérants perses et la littérature égyptienne”, *BIAO* 48 (1949), 68–70, 74–75).

35 A.I. BLÖBAUM, “Denn ich bin ein König, der Maat liebt”: *Herrscherlegitimation im spätzeitlichen Ägypten. Eine vergleichende Untersuchung der Phraseologie in der offiziellen Königsinschriften vom Beginn der 25. Dynastie bis zum Ende der makedonischen Herrschaft*, Münster 2006, 424.

36 D.B. REDFORD, “The Hyksos in History and Tradition”, *Orientalia* 39 (1970), 11–14.

over all the peoples of their empire outside Egypt, including the Macedonians and the Greeks.

From this excursus one should conclude that the word-combination *imytw h3st(y)w* in the biography of Nectanebo's son *by no means* must apply exclusively to his stay in the Achaemenian empire; in its literal meaning it would denote his stay outside Egypt (as can be seen from the mention of his eventual return there) among *any* non-Egyptians, who, as show the parallels of the early Macedonian time that we gave, might also include Macedonians and Greeks. Here the possibilities of reading out of these two words seem exhausted; but perhaps the denotation of the foreign ruler who was benevolent to the Egyptian prince will be more instructive. If one takes this episode for a stay of Nectanebo's son at Persia during the Second Persian Domination in Egypt, then this ruler must be one of the Great Kings of the time – Artaxerxes III, Arses or Darius III; perhaps, the text would even employ a generalized term applying to all of them at a time. However, the saying of the biographical text that the goddess rose the place of Nectanebo's son in the heart of the foreign ruler is aptly paralleled with the epithet “sweet of love in the heart of the ruler”

 *bnr mrt m ib n hq3*) found among the titles of Nectanebo's son at the start of the inscription on the surface of the dorsal pillar (col. 1).³⁷ However, the word “ruler” (*hq3*) in this epithet is written with a combination of two hieroglyphic signs:

S₃₈  (a stave with crook), which is a tri-consonantal phonetic sign for the stem *hq3*,

and A₄₄  (a figure of a seated king with a whip in his hands and wearing white Upper Egyptian crown), which serves here a generic determinative for the word “ruler”. The latter sign is important again due to the appearance of the crown in it. In traditional Ancient Egyptian notions, the crown is a highly sacralized attribute of a legitimate king possessing personal sacrality and ability to perform rituals to gods. Normally a ritual king would be designated with a specific title *nsw-bity* (“the King of Upper and Lower Egypt”) or with its shortening *nsw* (“the King”);³⁸ unlike these designations, the word *hq3* that is used in the text of Nectanebo's son is merely a descriptive characteristic of de-facto power, which could be applied widely enough – to legitimate sacral kings of Egypt, to foreign kings, or to local rulers within Egypt.³⁹ The texts on the statuette of Nectanebo's son designate the foreign ruler who favored him with this term; but at the same time its generic determinative in the epithet of the prince at the start of the text is evidently associated with the legitimate sacral kingship. Thus, this ruler was probably known to possess Egypt and to have certain qualities of its sacral ritual king, though these qualities were somehow not sufficient to call him with the proper name of this rank.

However reserved, such use of this designation seem to be perfectly impossible for either of the last three Achaemenids who hold Egypt but were not recognized its sacral kings (see our note 34); and the writing of the word *hq3* in the epithet of Nectanebo's son closely resembles its writing in the designation “the ruler of foreign countries as the protector of

37 CLÈRE, “Statuette”(n. 5), 138–139.

38 E.g., BLÖBAUM, “Denn ich bin ein König” (n. 35), 62–63.

39 Wb. III 170–173.

Egypt” (*hq3 nw h3swt m ndty hr Kmt*) applied, as we have seen, in the Great Autobiographical Inscription of Petosiris, probably, to Alexander the Great. Like the writing in Petosiris’ text, this writing in the epithet of Nectanebo’s son is a very faithful reflection of a reluctance, with which he must have been recognized a legitimate ritual king of Egypt by many members of its elite.⁴⁰

If the host of Nectanebo’s son in Asia is really to be identified with Alexander the Great, the Egyptian prince probably must have gone to his court after his stay in Egypt, later than the spring of 331 BC, and find him at the former Achaemenian lands in Asia. What could be the motives of this voyage? One can notice that, unlike the Stela of Naples in the case of Somtutefnakht,⁴¹ the texts of Nectanebo’s son do not tell about any war perils that he experienced; in such a case, though he had a military title of “the great chief of the army of His Majesty” (*imy-r-mšc wr tpy n hm.f*),⁴² his stay with Alexander was hardly connected with participation in the Oriental campaign as a combatant.⁴³ Nevertheless for Nectanebo’s son the possibility of facing Alexander and getting his benevolence (perhaps, within a larger Egyptian mission sent to Asia and charged both with honours to the king and practical deeds to be decided) seems by far not improbable.⁴⁴ However, if the interpretations that we proposed are true, we can say that this prince had no evident reasons to be hostile against Alexander; moreover, he considered a visit to him a matter of prestige; and nevertheless he abstained from styling him with a regular title of sacral king, much like this was done in the biography of Petosiris.⁴⁵ Such refusal to accept the Macedonian dynasts as the wholesome ritual kings of Egypt was probably a consensus of the Egyptian elite, not to be abandoned even under the good personal relations of some its members with these rulers.

40 Compare with our observations on a fragment of Egyptian clepsydra from the time of the Argeads: I. LADYNIN, “A Fragment of an Early Hellenistic Egyptian Clepsydra from the State Hermitage, St. Petersburg (Inv. No ДБ 2507a): A Native View of Early Macedonian Rule in Egypt”, in: A. Mehl, Alexander V. Makhlayuk and O. Gabelko (eds.), *Ruthenia Classica Aetatis Novae: A Collection of Works by Russian Scholars in Ancient Greek and Roman History*, Stuttgart 2013, 93–116 (esp. 106–111).

41 *Urk.* II 4.3–6.

42 The inscription on the surface of the dorsal pillar, col. 2: CLÈRE, “Statuette” (n. 5), 138–139.

43 According to GORRE (*Rélations* (n. 3), 379–380), it is questionable if the military title of Nectanebo’s son traditional for his family (CHEVEREAU, *Prosopographie* (n. 5), 154–157) was to any extend connected with real activities.

44 See a tentative interpretation of a biographical inscription of Wennefer from Saqqara dating to the 4th century BC that we have recently proposed: И.А. ЛАДЫНИН, “Александр Великий и Клеомен из Навкратиса в древнеегипетском источнике? (К интерпретации автобиографической надписи из гробницы Уннефера в Саккара)” (I. LADYNIN, “Alexander the Great and Cleomenes of Naucratis in an Egyptian Hieroglyphic Source? (On the Interpretation of the Autobiographical Inscription from the tomb of Wennefer at Saqqara)”), in: Мнемон: Исследования и публикации по истории античного мира, 12: Из истории античности и нового времени. Сборник статей к 80-летию со дня рождения проф. Э.Д. Фролова (Mnemon: Studies and Publications in Ancient History 12: Papers Presented to Prof. Eduard D. Frolov on his 80th Birthday), St. Petersburg 2013, 200–225.

45 See about the transfer by Petosiris’ on himself ritual functions, which he was reluctant to recognize for the Macedonian kings: U. RÖSSLER-KÖHLER, *Individuelle Haltungen zum ägyptischen Königtum der Spätzeit: Private Quellen und ihre Königswertung im Spannungsfeld zwischen Erwartung und Erfahrung*, Wiesbaden 1991, 287–292 (no. 87); cf. our note 40.

Nectanebo II and Alexander the Great¹

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Anonymous *Historia Alexandri Magni* better known as the *Alexander Romance* begins with a long prelude to the birth story of Alexander the Great introducing the last king of Egypt Nectanebo (II) who, having spotted through his magic enemy ships guided by gods of Egypt who thus had abandoned him, fled his country to settle in Macedonia where he pursued a successful career as astrologer (I 1-3). While in Pella he was approached by Olympias unsure of the true intents of her husband Philip of Macedon. Through an impressive astrological performance Nectanebo convinced Olympias that she was destined to have intercourse with Ammon of Siwah in whose guise he seduced her to sire Alexander (I 4-7). In order to accomplish his deed Nectanebo used astrology and magic which later proved useful again to provide a cover-up for Olympias before her somewhat annoyed husband (I 7-11). Thanks to his astrological expertise Nectanebo guided Olympias in the hour of childbirth to deliver her baby precisely at the moment when the stars assured that the newborn would become *kosmokrator*, or Lord of the World (I 12), just as his Egyptian predecessor Sesonchosis.²

But this is more than just a story of lust, sex and deceit: it opens the *Alexander Romance*, a fictional yet enormously influential biography of Alexander the Great with a strong hint at his Egyptian origin. A moment before Alexander's birth Nectanebo says to Olympias about changing signs of Zodiac: ὁ γὰρ φιλοπάρθενος Ζεὺς μηροτραφῆ τὸν εὖιον Διόνυσον ἀναδείξας, εὖδιος μεσουρανήσας, κριὸς Ἀμμων γενόμενος ἐπὶ τοῦ Ὑδροχόου <καὶ> Ἰχθύων, Αἰγύπτιον ἄνθρωπον κοσμοκράτορα βασιλέα ἀποκαθιστᾷ. ταύτῃ τῇ ὥρᾳ γέννησον. ("He (Zeus) became the ram Ammon, born under Aquarius, and the Fish, and he established an Egyptian man, a king, ruler of the world. In this hour, give birth to your child.")³ Thus Alexander of the *Alexander Romance*, the Greek culture hero par excellence is at the same time the hero of Egypt. This colourful story is historically untrue and chronologically impossible as Alexander's birth (356 BC) and conception preceded by over sixteen years the flight of Nectanebo from Egypt before the advancing army of Artaxerxes III (340/339 BC).⁴ As far as we can say historical Nectanebo never visited Macedonia nor

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- 1 Our research on this topic was supported by a grant from the National Science Centre (Poland) UMO–2012/05/B/HS2/04025.
 - 2 On Alexander the Great *kosmokrator* see: K. NAWOTKA and A. WOJCIECHOWSKA, "Alexander the Great *kosmokrator*" in: V. Grieb, K. Nawotka and A. Wojciechowska (eds.) *Alexander the Great and Egypt*, Wiesbaden 2014, 145–152.
 - 3 Ps.–Callisth., I 12.8, transl. by E. Haight. On the movement of celestial bodies in this passage see R. STONEMAN, *Il Romanzo di Alessandro*, I, Milan 2007, 493–497.
 - 4 R.A. PARKER and W.H. DUBBERSTEIN, *Babylonian Chronology 626 B.C.–A.D. 75*, Providence 1956, 19; A.B. LLOYD, "Manetho and the Thirty-First Dynasty", in: J. Baines (ed.), *Pyramid Studies and Other Essays Presented to I.E.S. Edwards*, London 1988, 154–156; L. DEPUYDT, *From Xerxes' Murder*

didhis and Alexander's paths ever cross, although the story of his adventures in Macedonia infiltrated into later seemingly serious historiographical works.⁵ The story of Nectanebo siring Alexander remained deeply ingrained in Western and some Eastern legends of Alexander surviving both in written form in numerous versions of the *Alexander Romance* and associated literature and in innumerable iconographic representations, beginning with the earliest depictions of stories belonging to the *Romance* cycle: in the fourth c. AD Soueidié mosaics and in late-third and fourth c. AD contorniates, seven series of which carry the scene of Olympias with a snake on a couch.⁶ This paper will try to assess how real is the core story of the *Alexander Romance* of Alexander's ties with Nectanebo, not in flesh but in perception and image-building.

King Nechtharebhe of XXX dynasty or Nectanebo II in Western sources was an important figure of Greek and Egyptian historical and literary writing. He features prominently in Diodorus and Plutarch in their account of wars of his successful Persian enemy Artaxerxes III, yet there is no direct evidence in surviving sources as to the ties between Nectanebo II and Alexander the Great prior to the *Alexander Romance*. In our earlier papers we tried to show that its source value should not be ignored as it conveys some valuable data on Egypt under Alexander, for instance historically accurate if unique information about his pharaonic coronation dated to Alexander's second sojourn in Memphis in the early April 334 BC.⁷ The unspecified date and circumstances of composition of the Egyptian logos of the *Alexander Romance* necessitates a thorough investigation of its motifs if they are to be used as historical evidence. This is particularly true of the story of Nectanebo II because both of its fabulous elements and of long-lasting memory of Nectanebo in religion and culture of Egypt. This may mean that the story of Nectanebo and Alexander was in fact born many years after 323 BC. Under the Ptolemies Nectanebo enjoyed a state-sponsored cult as the divine falcon which immediately calls to mind book one chapter eight of the *Alexander Romance* in which Nectanebo makes a sea-falcon a tool of his magic.⁸ Having observed a profusion of evidence of Nectanebo's cult under the Ptolemies and the very high

(465) to Arridaios' Execution (317): *Updates to Achaemenid Chronology (Including Errata in Past Reports)*, Oxford 2008, 281

- 5 Georgius Syncellus, *Ecloga chronographica*, p. 307: Οὗτος ὁ Ὡχος εἰς Αἴγυπτον ἐπιστρατεύσας ἐτι ζῶντος τοῦ πατρὸς Ἀρταξέρξου, ὡς καὶ ἄλλοι, μετὰ ταῦτα ἐκράτησεν Αἰγύπτου, φυγόντος Νεκτανεβῶ, ὡς τινές, εἰς Αἰθιοπίαν, ὡς δὲ ἕτεροι, εἰς Μακεδονίαν· ἦνίκα καὶ Ὀλυμπιάδι μυχθεῖς διὰ γοητείας υἱὸν ἔσχεν Ἀλέξανδρον Ἀμμωνος εἶναι θεοῦ υἱὸν νομιζόμενον. Also the *Alexandrian World Chronicle*, surviving as the *Excerpta Latina Barbari* (I 8.4); Malalas (VII 17); Georgius Monachus, *Chronicon* I, p. 25; *Analecta Syriaca*, p. 159, Budge.
- 6 Soueidié mosaic: M.H. CHEHAB, "Mosaïques du Liban. 5. – Villa de Soueidié – Baalbeck", *Bulletin du Musée de Beyrouth*, 14 (1957), 42–50. Contorniates: A. ALFÖLDI and E. ALFÖLDI, *Die Kontorniaten-Medaillons, II Text*, Berlin/ New York 1990, 109–111; K. DAHMEN, *The Legend of Alexander the Great on Greek and Roman Coins*, London and New York 2007, 32, 37–38. See also: D.J.A. ROSS, "Olympias and the Serpent: The Interpretation of a Baalbek Mosaic and the Date of the Illustrated Pseudo-Callisthenes", in: D.J.A. ROSS, *Studies in the Alexander Romance*, London 1985, 339–365.
- 7 WOJCIECHOWSKA and NAWOTKA, "Alexander", (n. 2).
- 8 J. YOYOTTE, "Nectanébo II comme faucon divin?" *Kémi* 15 (1959), 70–74; H. DE MEULENAERE, "Les monuments du culte des rois Nectanébo," *CE* 35 (1960), 92–107; R.B. FINNESTAD, "Temples of the Ptolemaic and Roman periods: ancient traditions in new contexts", in: B.E. Schafer (ed.), *Temples of Ancient Egypt*, New York 1997, 185–237, at 223; G. GORRE, "Nectanébo-le-faucon" et la dynastie lagide", *Anc.Soc.* 39 (2009), 55–69, at 55–56.

position of his priests among the Egyptian clergy under Ptolemy I, G. Gorre has advanced in a recent paper a hypothesis of the resurrection of the cult of this, in his eyes, unpopular ruler under the first Lagid king to help him legitimize the new Macedonian dynasty in Egypt.⁹ If indeed the original Egyptian logos of the *Alexander Romance* was first written in the early Ptolemaic period a question arises whether it preserves the original tradition of the ideological affinity between Nectanebo and Alexander or if the new tradition was written for them in order to further prop up the Ptolemies as legitimate successors to the last native dynasty of Egypt and to Alexander the Great. In the second part of this paper we propose to look at Alexander through the surviving Egyptian sources, to study his approach to Egyptian cults, construction works conducted in Egypt in his name and last, but not least, the names selected for pharaoh Alexander.

For all interest of classical sources in Nectanebo II, the hero of Egypt in its struggle with Artaxerxes III, non-military aspects of his reign and of his persona are rare and late. He becomes associated with magic and prophesying, lecanomancy in particular, first in the *Alexander Romance* and then in Byzantine authors.¹⁰ Almost certainly their source of knowledge was the *Alexander Romance*, since they repeat also the story of Nectanebo siring Alexander, known from the *Romance* and only from the *Romance*.¹¹ This striking silence of classical sources preceding the *Alexander Romance* on Nectanebo, the magician and fortune-teller speaks to non-Greek origin of this aspect of the image of Nectanebo in the *Romance*. The Egyptian origin of the Nectanebo-story in the *Alexander Romance* has been noticed already by the first modern editor of this *Historia Alexandri Magni* K. Müller and has been the generally accepted truth ever since.¹²

Significant non-Greek features in the Egyptian logos of the *Alexander Romance* begin with opening lines on Nectanebo introduced as the foremost in Egypt in magical knowledge: φασὶ γὰρ τὸν Νεκτανεβῶ, τὸν τελευταῖον τῆς Αἰγύπτου βασιλέα, μεθ' ὃν ἡ Αἴγυπτος ἐξέπεσε τῆς τοιαύτης τιμῆς, τῇ μαγικῇ δυνάμει πάντων περιγενέσθαι ("For they say that Nectanebos, the last king of Egypt, after whom Egypt lost its great glory, surpassed all men in the use of magic").¹³ Next the *Romance* reveals Nectanebo's tools of trade in magic and astrology. Nectanebo fights enemy troops by making wax boats and sailors, putting them into a bowl filled with water and chanting incantation, ebony wand in his hand (I 1.3-4). To a Greek reader, to whom Egypt was the birthplace of magic,¹⁴ this scene could

9 GORRE, "Nectanébo-le-faucon" (n. 8).

10 *Excerpta Latina Barbari* I 8.4; Georgius Monachus, *Chronicon* I, p. 25; id., *Chronicon breve*, I 17; Malalas, VII 17; Constantinus Porphyrogenitus, *De virtutibus et vitiis*, I, p. 156.

11 See n. 5 above.

12 K. MÜLLER, *Arriani Anabasis et Indica ex optimo codice Parisino emendavit et varietatem eius libri retulit Fr. Dübner. Reliqua Arriani et scriptorum de rebus Alexandri M. fragmenta collegit, Pseudo-Callisthenis historiam fabulosam ex tribus codicibus nunc primum edidit, Itinerarium Alexandri et indices adjecit Carolus Müller*, Paris 1846, XIX–XXII; also E.A.W. BUDGE, *The History of Alexander the Great, being the Syriac Version of the Pseudo Callisthenes. Edited from Five Manuscripts with an English Translation and notes*, Cambridge 1889, xxxv–li; S.H. AUFRERE, "Quelques aspects du dernier Nectanebo et les échos de la magie égyptienne dans « Le roman d'Alexander »", in: A. Moreau and J.-C. Turpin (eds.), *La magie. Actes du colloque internationale de Montpellier 25–27 mars 1999*, I, Montpellier 2004, 95–119.

13 Ps.-Callisth. I 1.2, transl. by E. Haight.

14 J.G. GRIFFITHS, "Apocalyptic in the Hellenistic Era", in: D. Hellholm (ed.) *Apocalypticism in the*

bear resemblance of lecanomancy, a Greek and Mesopotamian form of divination usually performed by study of shapes of oil poured on top of water in a bowl,¹⁵ although Nectanebo certainly does not read form oil on the surface of water, rather seeing clear images, much like in katoptromancy well attested in Byzantium and this adds only to the composite nature of the scene.¹⁶ To the modern scholar, Nectanebo's magic brings to mind Egyptian magical practices in which a wand, either ebony or ivory was a typical implement. Then there are wax figurines smacking of ushabti. The usage of figurines, usually of lead, by some compared with voodoo dolls, is well attested in ancient magic both by literary texts, curse tablets and archaeological finds in Greece, Cyrene and Egypt.¹⁷ Wax, however, was most typical of Egyptian magical practices with wax crocodile known magically turned into a living animal known from the Papyrus Westcar of the Old Kingdom. The tale of *Setne Khamwas and Naneferkaptah* of the Ptolemaic age has an episode resembling that of the Nectanebo story in the *Alexander Romance*: a wax model boat complete with oarsmen and sailor is magically made live. Actual wax figurines used in magical practices in late age Egypt are also attested archaeologically.¹⁸

In the discussion of magic in ancient Egypt one needs to part with preconceived ideas of magic as primitive debasement of religion from which it differs in its aim of manipulating supernatural beings rather than worshipping gods and supplicating them. In ancient Egypt the line between what some Westerners would call magic and what they would recognize as religion was blurred.¹⁹ As far as our evidence beginning with the *Pyramid Texts* show, a pharaoh was by definition endowed with magical powers or *hk3 (heka)*.²⁰ In the Egyptian cultural context it is, therefore, nor surprising that Nectanebo was surpassing his contempo-

Mediterranean world and the Near East : proceedings of the International Colloquium on Apocalypticism, Uppsala, August 12–17, 1979, Tübingen 1983, 273–274; F. DE SALVIA “La figura del mago egizio nella tradizione letteraria greco-romana”, in: A. Roccati and S. Siliotti (eds.), *La magia in Egitto ai tempi dei faraoni. Atti convegno internazionale di studi, Milano, 29–31 ottobre 1985*, Milano 1987, 343–365, especially 355–358; AUFRÈRE, “Quelques” (n. 12), 96. On ebony wand see S. AUFRÈRE, “L'ébène, l'ivoire et la magie en Égypte ancienne”, in: S. AUFRÈRE (ed.), *Encyclopédie religieuse de l'Univers végétal. Croyances phytoreligieuses de l'Égypte ancienne*, II, Montpellier 2001, 321–329.

15 R. GARZYŃCIEC, “Lekanomanteia”, *RE* XII (1925), col. 1879–1889; STONEMAN, *Romanzo*, I, (n. 3), 470–471.

16 R.P.H. GREENFIELD, “A Contribution to the Study of Palaeologan Magic”, in: H. Maguire (ed.), *Byzantine Magic*, Washington 1995, 117–153 at 146–147.

17 D. OGDEN, “Binding Spells: Curse Tablets and Voodoo Dolls in Greek and Roman World”, in: B. Ankarloo and C. Bengt (eds.), *In Witchcraft and Magic in Europe: Ancient Greece and Rome*, Philadelphia 1998, 1–90.

18 R.F. GÖTTINGEN, “Wachs”, in: W. Helck and W. Westendorf (eds.), *Lexikon der Ägyptologie*, VI, Wiesbaden 1986, cols. 1088–1094; C.A. FARAONE, “The Agonistic Context of Early Greek Binding Spells”, in: C.A. Faraone and D. Obbink (eds.), *Magika Hiera: Ancient Greek Magic and Religion*, Oxford 1991, 3–32, nos. 28–29, 31; AUFRÈRE, *Quelques*, (n. 12), 99–100; M. LICHTHEIM, *Ancient Egyptian Literature: A Book of Reading*, III, *The Late Period*, 2006, 127–138, esp. 130.

19 See the discussion of these issues in: G. PINCH, *Magic in Ancient Egypt*, London 2006, 9–17; J. ASSMANN, “Magie und Ritual im Alten Ägypten”, in: J. Assmann and H. Strohmann (eds.), *Magie und Religion*, Munich 2010, 23–43 at 23; C. THEIS, *Magie und Raum. Der magische Schutz auserwählter Räume im alten Ägypten nebst einem Vergleich zu angrenzenden*, Tübingen 2014, 10–18.

20 L. KÁKOSY „Heka”, in: W. Helck and W. Westendorf (eds.), *Lexikon der Ägyptologie*, II, Wiesbaden 1977, cols. 1108–1110; M. ETIENNE, *Heka. Magie et envoûtement dans l'Égypte ancienne*, Paris 2000, 41–44; PINCH, *Magic*, (n. 19), 50.

raries in his magical powers. But there are specific pieces of Egyptian evidence to Nectanebo-*hekau* or person endowed with magical powers. One is the famous Metternich Stele.²¹ It is one of so-called cippi of Horus, a category of Egyptian inscriptions with magical spells and magic related stories meant to protect people from attacks by scorpions and other venomous animals. They originate under XVIII Dynasty, to become really popular in the Late Period and in Graeco-Roman times, with at least 300 out of 433 surviving specimen dated to the period from XXVI dynasty to the end of the second c. AD.²² A prominent feature of the Metternich Stele carved in high relief is Horus holding snakes and scorpions which symbolize his magic powers. Nectanebo II, the founder of the stele, who kneels before Horus and as pharaoh is Horus in his lifetime, is thus endowed with magic powers.²³ The Metternich Stele is quite exceptional among the cippi of Horus in this that it bears the name of a pharaoh who founded it, leaving no doubt as to his interest in magic spells.

Nectanebo seduces Olympias in the guise of Ammon of Siwah and the reader of the *Romance* never knows whether he plays god or *becomes* god in the moment of conception of Alexander. About a dozen years later the Egyptian trickster and magician met his end at the hand of his son just prior to his death confessing to Alexander his real birth story (I 14). Olympias was thoroughly deceived and Alexander's affinity to Ammon goes far beyond the bounds of regular piety. Even if he learned from Nectanebo about his tricks, Alexander still honours Ammon of Siwah as his divine father (I 30, 34, 35; III 33) and this occurs on the authority of the vision in a dream (I 30), worships him as the highest god (I 33, 34), and receives his guidance in his military exploits (II 13; III 9). In essence the *Alexander Romance* conveys Alexander's belief in the divine fatherhood of Ammon, observed and related by his contemporaries Callisthenes and Ehippus and attested also in a second-c. AD choliambic epitaph which lists Alexander son of Ammon-turned-into-snake among those who could not escape death.²⁴

The *Alexander Romance* does not stop the Nectanebo file with his death at the hand of his son but continuous with Alexander treading in Egypt in the footsteps of Nectanebo and learning that his coming to this country was greeted with joy as reincarnation of the previous legitimate pharaoh and his father Nectanebo (I 34). The elaborate scene in which Alexander having being crowned pharaoh in the temple of Hephaestios (Ptah) in Memphis embraces the statue of Nectanebo and proclaims himself to the surrounding Egyptians son of Nectanebo immediately brings to mind a possible Egyptian meaning: a legitimate pharaoh

21 N.E. SCOTT, "The Metternich Stela", in: *The Metropolitan Museum of Art bulletin* 9.8 (1951), 201–217; C.E. SANDER-HANSEN, *Die Texte der Metternichstele*, Copenhagen 1956; L. KAKOSY, "Some Problems of the Magical Healing Statues", in: A. Roccati and A. Siliotti (eds.) *La Magia in Egitto ai tempi dei faraoni: atti, convegno internazionale di studi, Milano, 29–31 ottobre 1985*, Verona 1987, 171–186; H. STERNBERG-EL HOTABI, *Untersuchungen zur Überlieferungsgeschichte der Horusstelen. Ein Beitrag zur Religionsgeschichte Ägyptens im 1. Jahrtausend v. Chr.*, I–II, Wiesbaden 1999, at II, 72–73; J. RAY, *Reflections of Osiris: Lives from Ancient Egypt*, New York 2002, 124–125.

22 The comprehensive book on cippi of Horus is: STERNBERG-EL HOTABI, *Untersuchungen* (n. 21). See also PINCH, *Magic*, (n. 19), 143–146.

23 On pharaoh as Horus incarnate see, RAY, *Reflections* (n. 21), 121–122; T. WILKINSON, *The Egyptian World*, New York 2007, 281–283 (with reference).

24 Callisth. *FGrH* 124, F14a; Ehippus *FGrH* 126 F5. Also Arr. *An.* VII 8; Gel. XIII 4; Paus. IV 14.8. The epitaph probably from Alexandria: SEG 8.372: οὐδ' αὖ Μακηδὼν ὁ βασιλεὺς Ἀλέξανδρος, / ὃν τίκτεν Ἀμμων θεμενος εἰς ὄφιν μορφῇν.

should be son, preferably senior son of his legitimate predecessor.²⁵ And for the story line it is immaterial whether the historic Nectanebo II had a son and what was his career line after his father lost power in Egypt. As it happens Nectanebo's son resurfaced under Alexander, probably serving in the army of the new pharaoh.²⁶ If we agree with Huß, a Nectanebo's son (although not necessarily the same who served Alexander) married Ptolemais the daughter of Ptolemy I.²⁷ But of course there was never a question of the son of Nectanebo successfully claiming Egyptian crown as his inheritance.

There is more to the scene of begetting of Alexander. It begins with the lustful Nectanebo seducing Olympias but, as the scene progresses, Olympias encounters a number of lovers in her bed: Καὶ ταῦτα εἰπὼν ἐξέρχεται πρὸς τὴν ἰδίαν ὑπομονήν. γίνεται οὖν τὸ τοιοῦτον σύνηθες λοιπόν, ἡδέως αὐτῆς ἐχούσης ὡς ὑπὸ δράκοντος, Ἄμμωνος, Ἡρακλέους, Διονύσου πανθέου περιλαμβανομένης. ("With these words, he went away to his own time of waiting. And the future took its course: she rejoiced because she had been embraced by a serpent, Ammon, Heracles, Dionysos, all divine").²⁸ Nowhere in the narrative of this scene we learn that it was always Nectanebo in disguise. The opposite is equally possible if we read this passage as a Greek literary rendition of an Egyptian sacred marriage scene. As it is known from the age of the New Kingdom, with first representation in temple of Hatshepsut in Deir el-Bahari, in the Egyptian Divine Birth Cycle the queen was instrumental in passing divinity to the next pharaoh, her son. He was begotten by Amun-Re taking the appearance of the pharaoh, her husband who otherwise represented the god on Earth.²⁹ And of course Amun-Re was identified by the Greeks (and certainly by many Egyptians) with Ammon of Siwah.

The accurate account of Egyptian magical practices of the Late Period and the positive rendition of the king-magician are among numerous typically Egyptian literary and cultural features of the opening chapters of the *Alexander Romance*. Another is the cult of earlier kings and of royal statues or abandoning Nectanebo by the gods of Egypt. The astonishing number of Late Period cultural facets and Egyptian literary patterns speaks to the early date of the opening chapters of the *Alexander Romance* and to the Egyptian cultural milieu in which they originate. This immediately brings to mind the hypothesis advanced by Jasnow that the demotic original of the Egyptian logos of the *Alexander Romance* awaits to be uncovered in papyri.³⁰ The motive of the gods of Egypt abandoning Nectanebo is also known from the early Hellenistic *Dream of Nectanebo*, known from Greek and demotic

25 WILKINSON, *Egyptian* (n. 23), 78–81; GORRE, "Nectanébo-le-faucon" (n. 8), 55.

26 For the discussion of this issue see Ladynin's paper in this volume.

27 W. HUB, *Der makedonische König und die ägyptischen Priester. Studien zur Geschichte des ptol-emaischen Ägypten*, Stuttgart 1994, 27–28; R. LANE FOX, "King Ptolemy: Centre and Periphery", in: P. Wheatley and E. Baynham (eds.), *East and West in the World Empire of Alexander: Essays in Honour of Brian Bosworth*, Oxford 2015, 163–195, at 194.

28 Ps.-Callisth. I 7.4. Transl. by E. Haight.

29 WILKINSON, *Egyptian* (n. 23), 78; M. RIKALE, "Sacred Marriage in the New Kingdom of Ancient Egypt: Circumstantial Evidence for a Ritual Interpretation", in: M. Nissinen and R. Uro (eds.), *Sacred Marriages: The Divine-Human Sexual Metaphor from Sumer to Early Christianity*, Winona Lake 2008, 115–125.

30 R. JASNOW, "The Greek Alexander Romance and Demotic Egyptian Literature", *JNES* 56 (1997), 95–103.

fragments.³¹ Although it is impossible to verify the hypothesis that both the *Dream of Nectanebo* and the Egyptian logos of the *Alexander Romance* are part of or draw upon a lost “royal novel” of Nectanebo II,³² the initial twelve chapter of the book one of the *Alexander Romance* is an Egyptian tale, generally believed to have early-Hellenistic roots. Even if its original ties with the *Dream of Nectanebo* are only hypothetical, both these tales are convincingly interpreted as literary works of the early Ptolemaic period underlying the role of Macedonian kings as legitimate successors to XXX dynasty.³³

But does the Egyptian logos of the *Alexander Romance* belong to the realm of storytelling alone? And even if the Egyptian logos of the *Alexander Romance* and the *Dream of Nectanebo* played a role in legitimizing the Ptolemaic dynasty among the Egyptian elite, one need to ask for the rational of the selection of the two protagonists, Alexander the Great and Nectanebo. Apart from being literary characters of the *Alexander Romance*, they were also very real historical figures ruling Egypt in the interval of no more than nine years and fighting wars against the same enemy, the Persian empire. Since many more historical characters shared this characteristics, like Khababash and Ptolemy I, to name only rulers of the second half of the fourth c., fighting the Persians does not make Nectanebo II and Alexander akin. Hence a question of a some other possible ideological affinity of Nectanebo II and Alexander the Great needs to be asked.

In our earlier papers we have argued against the minimalist approach to Alexander as a brutal European conqueror uninterested in anything but war and plundering and thus disregarding local cultures in Asia and Africa. The evidence, Western and Egyptian alike, inadequate as it is, paints a very different picture. During his short sojourn in Egypt Alexander played as correctly as possible the role of a legitimate pharaoh going through the coronation ceremony, appointing Egyptians to high administrative posts, and taking sincere efforts to accommodate to local culture and religion dutifully sacrificing to Egyptian gods, paying for construction works in temples and making sure that his European soldier do not disturb the necropolis of sacred animals in Saqqara.³⁴

In the light of surviving evidence Alexander always performed studiously all acts of devotion, incurring even Plutarch’s censure for superstition, at least in the last months of his life.³⁵ Worshiping gods native to the place where they happened to be was a typical feature of Greek piety, as was the Greek habit of giving Greek names to foreign deities somehow similar to their Greek counterparts, e.g. Zeus to Amun or Heracles to Melqart. Hence it is not surprising at all that Alexander would sacrifice to the gods of Egypt once he wondered to this country. Therefore only the acts of Alexander’s religious behaviour in Egypt which

31 K. RYHOLT, “A demotic version of Nectanebo’s dream (P. Carlsberg 562)”, *ZPE* 122 (1998), 197–200; AUFRÈRE, *Quelques*, (n.11), 101–102; RAY, *Reflections* (n. 22), 126–127; K. RYHOLT, *Narrative Literature from the Tebtunis Temple Library*, Copenhagen 2012, 157–171.

32 L. KOENEN, “The Dream of Nektanebos”, *BASP* 22 (1985), 171–194.

33 K. RYHOLT, “Nectanebo’s Dream or the Prophecy of Petesis”, in: A. Blasisus and B.U. Schipper (eds.), *Apokalyptik und Ägypten. Eine kritische Analyse der Relevanten Texte aus dem griechisch-römischen Ägypten*, Leiden 2002, 236–238.

34 K. NAWOTKA, *Alexander the Great*, Newcastle upon Tyne 2010, 202–205; NAWOTKA and WOJCIECHOWSKA “Alexander” (n. 2), 145–151.

35 Plu. *Alex.* 75.1–2: δεῖσθαιμῶν. See Hamilton’s commentary on this: J.R. HAMILTON, Plutarch, *Alexander*,² London 1999, 207–208.

go beyond the regular Greek standard can be diagnostic of his political aims and designs. Of particular interest are Alexander's offerings to these Egyptian gods who took the incarnation of animals and who had no Greek equivalents, like Buchis bull, incarnating Montu and Apis bull incarnating Ptah and after his death Osiris. Upon taking Memphis in December 332 BC Alexander offered sacrifices to Egyptian gods, including Apis.³⁶ An indirect documentary evidence for Alexander's understanding of the importance of the cult of Apis is a papyrus from Saqqara containing orders to soldiers issued by Peucestas son of Mezerates on behalf of the commander-in-chief (i.e. of Alexander) not to enter the necropolis of sacred animals in Saqqara regarded a priestly area. This Greek document in all probability conveyed the will of Alexander to protect burial grounds of Apis bulls from desecration by his European soldiers.³⁷ According to Manetho Apis was worshiped already under II Dynasty but very little evidence for his cult precedes the New Kingdom.³⁸ Its popularity peaked in the Late Period with elaborate burial ceremonies in Memphite Serapeum. Alexander's worship of bull-shaped gods in the Late Period demonstrates the expert knowledge of local sensitivities upon which he drew. What is even more significant here is the associated cult of Mother of Apis, an incarnation of Isis, worshiped from Amasis at the latest.³⁹ This was a deity much less familiar to non-Egyptians than Apis, well known to the Greek audience thanks to the dramatic, if not quite accurate, Herodotus' account of madness of Cambyses who allegedly killed Apis in a fit of rage following his disastrous expedition to Nubia.⁴⁰ Similarly to Apis also his mother received ceremonial burial in Saqqara in the place known as Iseum: her embalmed body was placed in a sarcophagus deposited in Iseum. Information about the cow, her son, burial ceremony and the king who sponsored it were inscribed on a stele. More than a dozen stelae precede Alexander,⁴¹ seven are dated to

36 Arr. An. III 1.4. NAWOTKA, *Alexander* (n. 34), 202.

37 E.G. TURNER, "A Commander-in-Chief's Order from Saqqara", *JEA* 60 (1974), 239–242; NAWOTKA, *Alexander* (n. 34), 204–205.

38 I. SHAW and P. NICHOLSON, *The British Museum Dictionary of Ancient Egypt*, Cairo 2002, 36.

39 Stelae fund by W.B. Emery for the Egypt Exploration Society (1969–71), in the tomb of mother of bull Apis. See H.S. SMITH, "The Death and Life the Mother of Apis" in: A.B. Lloyd (ed.) *Studies in Pharaonic Religion and Society in Honour of J. Gwyn Griffiths*, London 1992, 201–225; H.S. SMITH, "Dates of the Obsequies of the Mothers of Apis", *REgypt* 24 (1972), table 2.

40 Hdt. III 27–29. Stele from Serapeum, Apis' epitaph: G. POSENER, *La première domination Perse en Égypte*, Cairo 1936, Text 3, 30–5. The same year of Apis' death given by T. CUYLER YOUNG, "The Early History of the Medes and the Persians and the Achaemenid Empire to the Death of Cambyses", *Cambridge Ancient History*, IV², 51, who explains that it happened when Cambyses was in the Upper Nubia. See also A.B. LLOYD, "The Late Period (664–332 BC)", in: I. Shaw (ed.) *The Oxford History of Ancient Egypt*, Oxford 2002, 383; D. DEVAUCHELLE, "Le sentiment anti-perse chez les anciens Égyptiens", *Transeuphratène* 9 (1995), 69; A. WOJCIECHOWSKA, "Czarna Legenda Kambyzesa", *Nowy Filomata* 8.1 (2004), 45–54 at 49. Stele from Serapeum, the sarcophagus' inscription: POSENER, *Première* (n. 40), Text 4, 35–36, text 5, 35–41; E. BRESCIANI, "The Persian Occupation of Egypt", in: *The Cambridge History of Iran*, II, 1985, 504; LLOYD, "Late" (n. 40), 383; WOJCIECHOWSKA, "Czarna" (n. 40), 49.

41 SMITH, "Dates" (n. 39), tables 4, 5; H.S. SMITH, "A Memphite Miscellany", in: J. Baines, T.G.H. James and A. Leahy (eds.), *Pyramid Studies and Other Essays presented to I.E.S. Edwards*, London 1988, 187; SMITH, "Death" (n. 39), 223; C.A.R. ANDREWS, "A Memphite Miscellany: Four New Demotic Texts", in: K. Ryholt (ed.), *Acts of the Seventh International Conference of Demotic Studies, Copenhagen, 23–27 August 1999*, Copenhagen 2002, 29.

Nectanebo I,⁴² four to Nectanebo II and then eight to Alexander.⁴³ The stelae dated to Alexander are much the same in form and contents as those commissioned by the kings of XXX Dynasty and their number is remarkably high, especially if compared with the virtual silence of sources on Apis and his mother in the period of the Second Persian Domination. It looks therefore that the cult of Mother of Apis, peculiar to the age of Nectanebo I and Nectanebo II, somewhat forgotten in the following period due to lack of the royal (Persian) patronage was resurrected under Alexander to continue under his son Alexander IV to whose reign two further stelae are dated.⁴⁴ Although it went unrecorded by classical sources, Alexander also worshipped Buchis bull or at least allowed it to be worshipped in his name, as is attested by a stele now in the British Museum.⁴⁵ Here again there is a concentration of evidence of works conducted in the burial grounds of Buchis bulls in Armant under Nectanebo II with a break under the Second Persian Domination and reappearance of cult of Buchis under Alexander.⁴⁶ Having in mind the popularity of zoomorphic gods in fourth c. BC Egypt on the one hand and their sheer awkwardness in the Greek eye, cult of Apis, Mother of Apis and Buchis performed in the name of Alexander and surely paid for by the king is an obvious testimony to the expert local knowledge drawn upon by the new pharaoh. The example of cult of these three gods has also the reoccurring pattern of the enormous interest in their worship under Nectanebo II, a hiatus under the Persian rule and the reappearance of their expensive cult in the name of Alexander.

Alexander's construction projects in Egypt have received thorough attention in recent decades in academic writings of L. Bell, D. Schäfer, C. Traunecker, I. Ladynin. Considering the length of his rule the building program in the name of Alexander was significant. This table shows it in the context of his immediate Egyptian predecessors and his Argead successors.

Many traditionally minded modern scholars doubt Alexander's knowledge of Egyptian religion and reject the notion of his personal involvement in drafting the building program conducted in his name, thus leaving all real decisions to the local priesthood.⁴⁷ If it was so, one would expect building projects paid for by the king to be dispersed through the country in a random pattern catering to the local needs. But the evidence of Alexander's building program shows something quite opposite: projects are clearly concentrated in just a few places mostly in and around Thebes (Luxor, Karnak, Medinet Habu), with much smaller evidence for projects in central Egypt (Armant, Hermopolis Magna) and in the Bahariya Oasis. This betrays a centrally drawn blueprint rather than the king's response to entreaties from clergy and local notables throughout Egypt. The greatest concentration of Alexander's

42 SMITH, "Dates" (n. 39), table 3

43 SMITH, "Dates" (n. 39), table 3, 4; SMITH, "Death" (n. 39), 209–210, 222.

44 SMITH, "Memphite" (n. 41), 187; SMITH, "Dates" (n. 39), table 5; SMITH, "Death" (n. 39), 213, 223.

45 PM, V, 158.

46 PM, V, 158, 159; F.K. KIENITZ, *Die politische Geschichte Ägyptens vom 7. bis zum 4. Jahrhundert vor der Zeitwende*, Berlin 1953, 214, no. 3, 227, no. 88, 90, 91.

47 M. CHAUVEAU and CHR. THIERS, "L'Égypte en transition: des Perses aux Macédoniens", in: P. Briant and F. Joannès (eds.), *La transition entre l'empire achéménide et les royaumes hellénistiques (vers 350–300). Actes du colloque organisé au Collège de France par la chaire d'histoire et civilisation du monde achéménide et de l'empire d'Alexandre et le réseau international d'études et de recherches achéménides*, 22–23 novembre 2004, Paris 2007, 375–404 at 397–399.

Temples and other religious structures	Nectanebo I	Nectanebo II	Alexander the Great	Philip III	Alexander IV
Karnak: Temple of Akhmenu			X	X	
Chapel of Khonsu		X	X		
Temple of Khonsu-Neferhotep	X		X		X
Great temple of Amun		X	X	X	
Luxor: Temple	X		X	X	
Hermopolis Magna: Temple of Thoth	X	X	X	X	X
Armant: Temple of Montu	X	X?	X		
Bahariya oasis; Temple of Horus and Amun in Qasr el-Megysbeh			X		X
Tukh el-Qaramus: Temple				X	X
Sebennytos: Temple of Onuris-Shu		X		X	X
Speos Artemidos					X
Elephantine: Temple of Khnum	X	X			X
Athribis	X			X	X
Sais	X	X			X
Medinet Habu: Temple of Amun	X	X	X		

Temple construction Nectanebo I to Alexander IV

building projects was in Karnak. Luxor houses the most renown of all Alexander's foundations in Egypt, the Temple of the Barque. A beneficiary was also the temple of Amun in Medinet Habu on the western side of the Nile. I. Ladynin showed convincingly that this concentration of building projects in and around Thebes was not accidental: it followed in the footsteps of Nectanebo I and II for whom Thebes with its cult of Amun and the Opet festival was of particular importance from the point of view of sacrality of royal power.⁴⁸ Alexander and his Argead successors continued building programs drafted under XXX dynasty kings in some other places too: most notably in Hermopolis Magna and Armant. The sheer amount of the well-attested continuation speaks for a conscious decision of Alexander to concentrate his efforts in Egypt in places once selected by Nectanebo I and Nectanebo II as recipients of their religious generosity.

A chosen way for any Late Period pharaoh to show his affinity to a predecessor was the selection of names he assumed upon ascending the throne. This is best illustrated by the naming practices of kings of the Saite XXVI dynasty, the one whose long lasting and very successful tenure provided a ready muster to many later pharaohs, native and foreign alike. The Throne Name of Psamtik I was Wah-ib-Re, his son's Necho II Wehem-ib-Re, while his grandson Psamtik II broadly continued in this line assuming the name Nefer-ib-Re. The Throne Name of the next king Apries was Haa-ib-Re in the tradition of his predecessors.⁴⁹

After many years of research now it has been established beyond doubt that Alexander, unlikely many pharaohs of the Late Period assumed all five canonical royal names.⁵⁰ His Horus name was: *Hrw mk Kmt* (Horus „the one who protects / the protector of Egypt”) or *Hrw hq3 qn tkn h3swt* (Horus ‘the brave ruler, the one who tramples on / attacks the foreign countries),⁵¹ his Two Ladies name: *Nbty m3l wr phty it dww t3w h3swt* (Two Ladies “the lion, great of might, the one who takes possession of mountains, lands, and deserts”),⁵² his Golden Horus name: *K3-nht jw^c(.w)-t3.wj hq3-w3d-šn.t-jtn* (Horus of Gold “the [strong] bull who protects Egypt, the ruler of the (Great-)Green (= the sea) and of what the sun encircles”),⁵³ his Throne name: *stp-n-R^c mr(y)-Imn* (“chosen of Re and beloved of Amun”), *mr(y)-R^c stp-n-Imn* (“beloved of Re and chosen of Amun”)⁵⁴ and his Birth name: *s3 R^c*

48 I. LADYNIN, “The Argeadai Building Program in Egypt in the Framework of Dynasties’ XXIX–XXX Temple Building” in: V. Grieb, K. Nawotka and A. Wojciechowska (eds.) *Alexander the Great and Egypt*, Wiesbaden 2014, 201–220.

49 The same practice is attested in the case of Ptolemy I who borrowed the name Kheperkare from Sesostris I, GORRE, “Nectanébo–le–faucou” (n. 8), 55.

50 F. BOSCH-PUCHE, “The Egyptian Royal Titulary of Alexander the Great I: Horus, Two Ladies, Golden Horus, and Throne Names”, *JEA* 99 (2013), 131–154; F. BOSCH-PUCHE, “The Egyptian Royal Titulary of Alexander the Great II: Personal Name, Empty Cartouches, Final Remarks, and Appendix”, *JEA* 100 (2013), 89–110; F. BOSCH-PUCHE, “Birth name (Personal name)” section (in print); F. BOSCH-PUCHE, “Alexander the Great’s Egyptian Names in the Barque Shrine at Luxor Temple” in: V. Grieb, K. Nawotka and A. Wojciechowska (eds.) *Alexander the Great and Egypt*, Wiesbaden 2014, 55–87.

51 A.I. BLÖBAUM, *Denn ich bin ein König, der die Maat liebt: Herrscherlegitimation im spätzeitlichen Ägypten; eine vergleichende Untersuchung der Phraseologie in den offiziellen Königsinschriften vom Beginn der 25. Dynastie bis zum Ende der makedonischen Herrschaft*, Münster 2006, 419; BOSCH-PUCHE, “Egyptian” (n. 50), 132–138; BOSCH-PUCHE, “Alexander”, (n. 50), 56, 63, 86.

52 BLÖBAUM, *Denn ich bin ein König* (n. 51), 420; BOSCH-PUCHE, “Egyptian” (n. 50), 138–140.

53 BLÖBAUM, *Denn ich bin ein König* (n. 51), 420; BOSCH-PUCHE, “Egyptian” (n. 50), 140–142.

54 BOSCH-PUCHE, “Egyptian” (n. 50), 142–154; F. BOSCH-PUCHE, “Alexander” (n. 50), 64.

3rksindrs (“Son of Re Alexander”) or *s3-Imn 3rksindrs* („Son of Amun Alexander”).⁵⁵ This alone was a stunning development very clearly indicating professionalism and devotion of his Egyptian priestly advisors and his willingness to follow expert advice on the proper demeanour of a good pharaoh.

Alexander’s royal Egyptian names betray the examples he followed. His Horus name contains the phrase *mk Kmt* attested earlier in the Two Ladies name under XIX and XX dynasty, especially in the age of the warlike Ramses II, then resurrected in the Horus name of Nectanebo II. Alexander’s phrase *tkn h3swt* appeared earlier in the Two Ladies name of Nectanebo II. Another form of Alexander’s Horus name contains the word *qn* known under earlier king too. It was employed in the Golden Horus names of Ramses III and Psamtik III, in the Two Ladies name of Akoris and again in the Golden Horus name of Nectanebo I. Before Alexander the *tm3-ꜥ* form was used in the Horus name only by Nectanebo I. Also the Two Ladies name of Alexander was clearly shaped on the example of earlier native pharaohs. The Two Ladies name ‘the lion, great of might, the one who takes possession of mountains, lands, and deserts’ popular in the age of New Kingdom reappeared with Alexander. The phrase *wr phly* first employed in the XVIII dynasty protocols was rediscovered for Alexander to survive until Ptolemaic times. The Golden Horus name of Alexander was borrowed freely from earlier pharaohs too. The *k3 nht* phrase was used under XVIII and XIX dynasties and again by pharaohs Piye and Shebitku of XXV dynasty. Another element of the Golden Horus name *hwi B3q[t]* is attested in the Golden Horus name of Tachos of XXX Dynasty, while the phrase *hwi t3wy* can be found in the Throne names of XXX dynasty rulers.⁵⁶

The overall picture is complex: Alexander’s royal Egyptian names drew upon examples of earlier pharaohs, beginning with the New Kingdom which is not surprising considering that this was the age of Egypt’s greatest might and flowering of the classical Egyptian culture which provided a paradigm for later periods. This corresponds to some attested artistic borrowings: Alexander’s Temple of the Barque was executed in the classical style of the New Kingdom to signal the return of the years times of Egypt, on the ideological level at least.⁵⁷ Some phrases in Alexander’s royal Egyptian names were borrowed from pharaohs of the Late Period, although with no preference for kings of the most celebrated XXVI Dynasty of Sais. Of all Alexander’s predecessors on the throne of Egypt kings of XXX dynasty stand out with elements of his royal names borrowed most profusely from Nectanebo I and Nectanebo II. Judging by the names chosen for pharaoh Alexander he was the heir to glory of Egypt of the New Kingdom and to his immediate native predecessors of the XXX dynasty.

The Egyptian evidence shows clearly much of continuation from the dynasty of Nectanebo II to Alexander in promoting the same cults, conducting construction works in the same temples and selecting the same phrases in royal names. None of these developments is a direct continuation from the Second Persian Domination, quite the opposite: one has

55 BLÖBAUM, *Denn ich bin ein König* (n. 51), 421, 422; BOSCH-PUCHE, “Egyptian”, II, (n. 50), “Personal name” section; BOSCH-PUCHE, “Alexander”, (n. 50), esp. 81.

56 BOSCH-PUCHE, “Egyptian”, (n. 50), 133–141.

57 M. ABD EL-RAZIQ, *Die Darstellungen und Texte des Sanktuars Alexanders des Grossen im Tempel von Luxor*, Cairo 1998.

the impression that in image building Alexander and his Egyptian advisors took an effort to obliterate the Persian rule and to present the new king as the direct successor to Nectanebo II, effectively also passing over a shadowy native pharaoh Khababash. In Egyptian royal ideology a legitimate king was his predecessor's son. We do not have a direct reference in surviving Egyptian sources of Alexander presenting himself as the son of Nectanebo II. Yet the Egyptian logos of the *Alexander Romance* may be a true reflection that this notion was not absent from Egypt of the age of Alexander the Great.

Alexander and the Island of Pharos*

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At the entrance to the port of Alexandria there was a small rocky island called Pharos. The island of Pharos appears in Homer's *Odyssey*: "Now there is an island in the surging sea in front of Egypt, and men call it Pharos, distant as far as a hollow ship runs in a whole day when the shrill wind blows fair behind her".¹

The distance which according to Homer separates the island from Egypt, and which a ship covers in one day, was found intriguing already in antiquity. In reality the distance between the island and the coast is less than an English mile. Some authors attempted to save Homers authority, hypothesizing that the coast-line had since Homer's time advanced as a consequence of accumulation of the alluvial river mud.² Modern companions to the *Odyssey* suggest "Homer's ignorance of, or lack of concern for, geography ..." and consider the approach of the authors who in antiquity attempted to explain the discrepancy "artificial and unconvincing".⁴

In spite of the scepticism of modern commentators as to the reliability of the passage concerning the distance, it must not be considered an error, since it may refer to a voyage along the coast of the Delta, measured from a mouth of the Nile, the river being called *Aigyptos* as well.⁵ A similar method of counting distance (150 stadia from Thonis to Pharos) is found for example in the *Periplus* attributed to Skylax.⁶

A delicate matter, however, is the question, why should Homer mention a small island situated far away from the Nile? Modern researchers propose an explanation: "The poet appears to have borrowed an Egyptian toponym for the desert island which his story required without regard to geographical reality".⁷ Other islands existed also in the area of the now sunken cities of the Delta coast (Thonis/Herakleion, Menouthis).⁸

In the present writer's opinion the whole passage under discussion may be a *pia fraus* of the Alexandrian philologists, who used to correct Homer and were indeed very likely to embellish Homer's story with an addition compatible with the topography of Alexandria.

* Extracted from a preliminary version of a forthcoming publication by the present author.

1 Hom. *Od.* IV 354–357. English translation by A.T. MURRAY quoted from Homer, *The Odyssey*, Cambridge Mass., London 1974, I, 133.

2 Str. I 2.30; I 3.17; III 1.9; Plin. *Nat.* II 201, Sen. *Nat. quaest.* VI 26. Cf. Arist. *Mete.* I 14.

3 PETER V. JONES, *Homer's Odyssey: A Companion to English Translation of Richmond Lattimore*, Bristol 1988, 40.

4 A. HEUBECK, S. WEST and J.B. HAINSWORTH, *A Commentary on Homer's Odyssey, I: Introduction and Books I–VIII*, Oxford 1988, 215–216.

5 cf. Hom. *Od.* IV 477.

6 Scyl. 107 in: *Geographi Graeci Minores*, (ed.) Carolus Müllerius, I, Paris 1882, 81–82.

7 HEUBECK, WEST and HAINSWORTH, *Commentary* (n. 1), 216.

8 cf. M. CLAUSS, *Alexandria: Schicksale einer antiken Weltstadt*, Stuttgart 2003, 37–39.

The estimate of the distance could perhaps be explained as an attempt to avoid a reference to the Alexandrian coast in order to be more trustworthy. Thus, the island belonging to Ptolemaic Alexandria received a Homeric pedigree so much desired in the Greek world and certainly at the court of the Ptolemies.

The eastern bay of the future Alexandria had been used as harbour long before Alexander. In the early history of the city founded by Alexander the island of Pharos was connected with the mainland by an artificial dike called Heptastadion, c. 1.3 km long. (By the way Caesar gives the length of 900 paces).⁹

In later times there was a significant settlement on the island, confirmed in Caesar's time: *In hac sunt insula domicilia Aegyptiorum et vicus oppidi magnitudine*. Caesar states that this community had particular customs, which made them similar to pirates: *quaequae ibi naves imprudentia aut tempestate paulum suo cursu decesserunt, has more praedonum diripere consuerunt*.¹⁰ The presence of a town agrees with the original wish of Alexander to have the city built on the island (Plutarch).¹¹ Also Curtius Rufus explicitly states that Alexander at first wanted to found the city on the island.¹²

There were already earlier structures from the pharaonic period in the area. Alexandria was not entirely new. A powerful argument in favour of the planning of Alexandria including the island of Pharos by the king himself can be found in Plutarch's *Life of Alexander*, where a reference to Alexander's dream is reported with a god's advice (in form of a quotation from Homer) to build the projected city on the island.¹³ Plutarch states that after the vision he had seen in the night, Alexander "rose up and at once went to Pharos ...".¹⁴ The importance of the island seems to exceed the role of a mere defence of the port. Pharos was **the place** where Alexander intended to build. The prophecy may be considered an example of the usual propaganda accompanying Alexander's actions. What was the true reason of Alexander's choice? Certainly a decisive factor was the situation of Pharos near the Nile's Canopic mouth and in a key position between Egypt and the important zone extending westwards from Kanopos. Alexander's interest in Pharos is confirmed by his later wish to erect there a huge temple in honour of Hephaestion.¹⁵ Although in the Roman period the island had very few inhabitants since it had been devastated by Caesar,¹⁶ it was still fortified and fulfilled in the first century AD the (original) defensive function.¹⁷

On the island of Pharos Sostratos of Knidos is said to have erected in the early Ptolemaic period one of the seven wonders of the world, the famous tower, which was in antiquity the highest lighthouse in the world. On the top of the tower, there was a fire burning as a beacon to sailors. There are some indications concerning the mirrors or lenses to increase the light. Such devices are the origin of stories about the magical *katoptron* which was

⁹ *in longitudinem pasuum DCCCC*: Caes. *Bell. civ.* III 112.

¹⁰ Caes. *Bell. civ.* III 112.

¹¹ Plu. *Alex.* 26.2.

¹² Curt. IV 8.1.

¹³ Plu. *Alex.* 26.3.

¹⁴ Plu. *Alex.* 26.3.

¹⁵ Arr. *An.* VII 23.7–8. Cf. J.MC KENZIE, *The Architecture of Alexandria and Egypt, c. 300 to AD 700*, New Haven/London 2007, 39 n. 27.

¹⁶ Str. XVII 1.6.

¹⁷ J. *BJ* IV 614.

allegedly used by Alexander to detect his enemies and which appear in some Oriental versions of the *Alexander Romance*.

Strabo states that the tower was dedicated by Sostratos of Knidos, a friend of the kings.¹⁸ The person of Sostratos is mysterious. Apparently, he lived in the late fourth and early third century BC. He is mentioned by Pliny (see below) as an architect and builder not only of the Pharos tower but also of a kind of a bridge (?) at Knidos. The son of Dexiphanes of Knidos was undoubtedly more than just an architect. He was certainly an influential person at the royal court. His attested title of *philos ton basileon* is not an evocation of a personal friendship but a formal rank of *philos* at the Ptolemaic court. Fraser rejects the idea that Sostratos was the architect of the tower and sees in him only the dedicant, a “wealthy Ptolemaic courtier, and its architect remains unknown”.¹⁹

An important testimony of Sostratos is the famous epigram of Poseidippos, a poet born c. 320-310 BC, active in Alexandria since c. 280, dead probably c. 240 BC,²⁰ that reads:

“As a saviour of the Greeks, this watchman of Pharos, O lord Proteus,
was set up by Sostratus, son of Dexiphanes, from Knidos.
For in Egypt there are no look-out posts on a mountain, as in the islands,
but low lies the breakwater where ships take harbour.
Therefore this tower, in a straight and upright line,
appears to cleave the sky from countless furlongs away,
during the day, but throughout the night quickly a sailor on he waves
will see a great fire blazing from its summit.
And he may even run to the Bull’s Horn, and not miss
Zeus the Saviour, O Proteus, whoever sails this way.”
(Transl. C. Austin).²¹

Pliny gives an interesting statement about the construction of the tower, including the expense:

“Magnificatur et alia turris a rege facta in insula Pharo portum optinente Alexandria, quam constituisse DCCC talentis tradunt, magno animo, ne quid omittamus, Ptolemaei regis, quo in ea permiserit Sostrati Cnidii architecti structura ipsa nomen inscribi. usus eius nocturno navium cursu ignes ostendere ad praenuntianda vada portusque introitum, quales iam compluribus locis flagrant, sicut Ostiae ac Ravennae, periculum in continuatione ignium, ne sidus existimetur, quoniam e longinquo similis flammarum aspectus est. hic idem architectus primus omnium pensilem ambulationem Cnidi fecisse traditur”.²²

18 Str. XVII 1.6.

19 P.M. FRASER, *Ptolemaic Alexandria*, I, Oxford 1972, 20.

20 E. FERNÁNDEZ-GALIANO, *Posidipo de Pella*, Madrid 1987, 9 – 18; D.J. THOMPSON, “Posidippus, Poet of the Ptolemies”, in: K. Gutzwiller (ed.), *The New Posidippus: A Hellenistic Poetry Book*, Oxford 2005, 269–283, see 269; M.M. DI NINO, *I fiori campestri di Posidippo. Ricerche sulla lingua e lo stile di Posidippo di Pella*, Göttingen 2010, 17–28.

21 C. AUSTIN and G. BASTIANINI (eds.), *Posidippi Pellaei quae supersunt omnia*, Milano 2002, 143, no. 115.

22 Plin. *Nat.* LXXXVI.83.

It is difficult to understand why a private person was allowed to erect such an enormous monument. Already in antiquity authors wondered why Sostratos was granted such an honour. The information of Pliny is clear: *turris a rege facta in insula Pharo*. The builder was the king, Sostratos was an architect. Lucian gives the text of the inscription set upon the building: *Sostratos Deksiphanous Knidios theois sotersin hyper ton ploizomenon* and states that Sostratos, who built the tower plastered over his own inscription and put on the plaster the name of the king. He knew that the plaster would fall off and his own name would be visible.²³ Dirk Obbink correctly considers this story “an evident fiction sufficiently exposed by the appearance of Posidippus’ inscription on papyrus”.²⁴

In 1998 Peter Bing advanced the theory that Sostratos’ dedication concerned the statue of Zeus Soter on the top of the tower and not the entire building.²⁵ The inscription was located on the lower surface of the tower, since otherwise it would not be visible. However, the dedicatory inscription concerned the statue on the top of the tower.

We have to accept this idea, shared also by Obbink.²⁶ This agrees with the wording of Posidippus’ epigram. “The watchman of Pharos set up by Sostratos” of the epigram 115 cannot be the tower of Pharos but only the statue crowning its summit, confirmed by the ancient iconography of the tower. Also the text of the inscription quoted by Lucian does not contradict the idea of the statue being dedicated by Sostratos. The plural *theois sotersin* seems to show that apart from the statue of Zeus which stood on the top, there were probably other statues, including most probably the Dioscuri and perhaps also the royal couple of Ptolemy II and Arsinoe.

There was no *consensus* in antiquity about the date of the building. According to the *Liber Suda* the famous lighthouse of Pharos was built in 297 BC, while Eusebius mentions the date of BC 283/282. It is difficult to decide which of the dates is correct or closer to correctness. In the fourth century AD Ammianus attributes the lighthouse to Cleopatra VII.²⁷ If the builder was Ptolemy I or II (a later date is not possible), why did they not set up appropriate inscription to commemorate such a brilliant achievement? There is only one probable answer. Neither Ptolemy Soter nor Ptolemy II built the tower. They probably only finished the extant (and perhaps incomplete) structure which had existed before their reigns. The tower was probably built already by Cleomenes at the order of Alexander and left unfinished, until the two first Ptolemies gave the building its ultimate shape and Sostratos provided for the statues as ornaments on the top.

The function of the tower, apparently evident, seems, however, to remain an open problem. Many sources, particularly of the Roman period, confirm the role of the tower as a lighthouse. Strabo at the beginning of the Roman period gave the following interpretation:²⁸

23 Luc. *Hist. Conscr.* 62.

24 D. OBBINK, “Posidippus on Papyrus Then and Now”, in: B. Acosta-Hughes, E. Kosmetatou and M. Baumbach (eds.), *Labored in Papyrus Leaves: Perspectives on an Epigram Collection Attributed to Posidippus* (P. Mil. Vogl. VIII 309), Cambridge, MA/Washington 2004, 16–28, see 23.

25 P. BING, “Between Literature and the Monuments” in: M.A. Harder, R.F. Regtuit and G.K. Wakker (eds.), *Genre in Hellenistic Poetry*, Groningen 1998, 21–43.

26 OBBINK, “Posidippus” (n. 24).

27 Amm. XXII 16.9: ... *excogitavit in portu Cleopatra turrim excelsam, quae Pharos a loco ipso cognominatur*.

28 Str. XVII 1.6.

“... a splendid building of white stone, with many storeys, bearing the same name as the island. It was dedicated by Sostratos of Cnidos, a friend of the kings, for the safeguard of sailors, as the inscription states ... those coming from the sea needed a sign situated high enough and well visible in order to successfully find the entrance to the port”.

Pliny adds:

“usus eius nocturno navium cursu ignes ostendere ad praenuntianda vada portusque introitum, quales iam compluribus locis flagrant, sicut Ostiae ac Ravennae, periculum in continuatione ignium, ne sidus existimetur, quoniam e longinquo similis flammaram aspectus est.”²⁹

Josephus states that the light from the Pharos lighthouse was visible 300 stadia away, to warn the sailors making for the port.³⁰ Lucian puts the purpose of the tower into the following words: “that a beacon-light might shine from it for sailors far over the sea”.³¹ Ammianus, as stated above, attributes the tower to Cleopatra and continues, thus describing the function of the building:

“... praelucendi navibus nocturna suggerens ministeria, cum quondam ex Parthenio pelago venientes vel Libyco, per pandas oras et patulas, montium nullas speculas vel collium signa cernentes, harenarum illisae glutinosae mollitiae frangerentur”.³²

This is taken both from the contemporaneous reality and from the earlier authors who confirm Pharos tower as a lighthouse. The tower’s function as a lighthouse is therefore obvious, but was it the only role played by the enormous building?

In the present writer’s opinion the tower of Pharos was not set up exclusively for the benefit of sailors but above all as a fortified watch-tower, protecting Egypt from invasions from the sea. Josephus mentions the fortified character of the island (“immense walls”).³³ The function of a “saviour of the sailors”, so widely attested, was only a secondary (and quite obvious) aspect of the enormous building. No doubt the explanation by Strabo (above) describes well the function of the lighthouse in the early Roman period, when – after the conquest of Egypt and the establishment of the new global order by Augustus – no actual danger could be expected at the newly Roman occupied port of Alexandria.

It is significant, however, that in his slightly earlier succinct account of Pharos, Julius Caesar, a matter-of-fact writer, who had to fight in Alexandria, does not mention at all the lighthouse function of the Pharos tower, and concentrates only on the defense of the port:

“Pharus est in insula turris magna altitudine, mirificis operibus exstructa, quae nomen ab insula cepit. haec insula obiecta Alexandriae portum efficit... Eis autem in-

29 Plin. *Nat.* LXXXVI.83.

30 J. *BJ* IV 613.

31 Luc. *Hist. Conscr.* 62. English translation by K. KILBURN, Lucian, VI, Cambridge Mass. 1959, 73.

32 Amm. XXII 16.9.

33 J. *BJ* IV 614.

vitis, a quibus Pharos tenetur, non potest esse propter angustias navibus introitus in portum”.³⁴

In the third century AD, a papyrus document of year 246 mentions Pharos as a frontier check point to persons leaving Egypt by sea. A passport from the prefect of Egypt was needed in order to *ekpleusai dia Pharou*.³⁵

In the course of time, the causeway which connected the island of Pharos with the mainland became silted up and the island was transformed into a peninsula. At the place where the famous lighthouse stood until the Middle Ages, stands now the late medieval fortress of sultan Qait Bey built in the fifteenth century.³⁶

The fire on the top of the lighthouse is explicitly mentioned by ancient sources. Stories about mirrors or lenses are difficult to verify, but should not be rejected *a priori*. A lift bringing fuel to the source of light is another hypothetical device.

An uncommon papyrus text of the third century BC was found at Edfu in spring of 1939 by the Polish-French archaeological expedition and edited by a Polish papyrologist Jerzy Manteuffel. This papyrus contains an absolutely exceptional text.³⁷ It is a letter mentioning a newly invented agricultural device, directed to king Ptolemy III by a Macedonian military settler from Edfu. The text begins with a formula which indirectly concerns our Alexandrian topic: “To King Ptolemy greeting from Philotas, operator of fire telegraph (*pyrsouros*), a *klerouchos* (military settler) of Apollinopolis Magna”.³⁸

The further contents of the letter is exciting, but unrelated. The essential issue is the existence in the mid-third century BC of a fire telegraph in Upper Egypt. No doubt the fire used to give signals burnt on a hill (which is possible in Upper Egypt) or on a tower (very probably on a temple pylon, which is equally possible at Edfu). Such an installation has only sense when it is a part of a network extending over whole country. The central post of the system must have been in the capital. In Alexandria there are no hills and no structure was higher than the tower of Pharos. This points to a multiple function of the tower: a watch-tower, a lighthouse, and – last but not least – the central post of the royal telegraph.³⁹ The system was borrowed from the Persian empire and was possibly initiated in the times of Alexander, which means that the tower could be at least designed – if not built, perhaps in part – in the reign of Alexander.

The attribution of the Pharos tower to the early Ptolemies is due to the probable final works on the tower under their successive long reigns. To the period of Ptolemy II belongs

34 Caes. *Bell. civ.* III 112.

35 P. Oxy. X 1271.1–5.

36 R.S. BAGNALL and D. RATHBONE, *Egypt from Alexander to the Copts: An Archaeological and Historical Guide*, London 2004, 58.

37 P. Edfou 8; re-edited in A. ŁUKASZEWICZ, “Remarques sur P. Edfou 8”, *JJP* 26 (1997), 91–98; A. ŁUKASZEWICZ, “Le papyrus Edfou 8 soixante ans après”, *Tell Edfou soixante ans après, IFAO, Fouilles Franco-Polonoises* 4, Cairo 1999, 29–35.

38 Reading *pyrsouros*: E. VAN’T DACK, “Postes et télécommunications ptolémaïques”, *ChrÉg* 37 (1962) 338–41; reprinted in: E. VAN’T DACK, *Ptolemaica Selecta. Études sur l’armée et l’administration lagides*, Leuven 1988, 96–102.

39 A. ŁUKASZEWICZ, “Sur les pas de Ptolémée Ier. Quelques remarques concernant la ville d’Alexandrie”, in: H. Hauben and A. Meeus (eds.), *The Age of the Successors and the Creation of the Hellenistic Kingdoms (323–276 B.C.)*, Leuven 2014, 189 – 205, at 203–204.

certainly the setting up of statues dedicated to *Theoi soterai* by Sostratos of Knidos. Later he was credited with the construction and dedication of the whole structure, but it seems more probable that he was the supervisor of the works on the tower under Ptolemy II and was responsible also for the statuary decorating the enormous building.

Hunters on Horseback: A New Version of the Macedonian Iconography in Ptolemaic Egypt

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The particular interest in the hunting iconography of the Macedonian tradition arises from the wider study about the Hellenistic vitreous ware in the Sandwich Gold-Glass technique,¹ the matter of study of my master thesis. The rare examples of bowls discovered so far distinguish themselves by hemispherical or parabolic form and geometrical or vegetable decorations, widespread throughout the Mediterranean and beyond.² Only two of them stand out because of the form, shallow bowl, and the decorative solution with figurative scene. They are an entire bowl found in Tresilico³ (Reggio Calabria) and a fragment coming from Egypt, preserved in Moscow.⁴ They have in common a synthetic style and in particular the graphic manner of the trees is the same. Both the subjects are interesting because of the

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- 1 This technique consists in the assembly of two layers of transparent colourless glass, between which is sandwiched a gold leaf carved with different motifs. In order to fit together, the inner and outer bowls had to be made to an exact and predetermined shape and size. The gold decoration was stuck to the outer wall of the inner bowl, maybe using an adhesive or some water. According to some authors, the two layers were fused together.
 - 2 Two twin hemispheric bowls from Canosa are preserved in the British Museum (Greek and Roman Department, GR 1871.5-18.1; GR 1871.5-18.2), like also a fragment from Babylon (Western Asiatic Department Rm-IV.505) and one from Tanis (Egyptian Department 15835 /1885.1-1.296); other two twin hemispheric bowls likely bought in Istanbul are now one in the Museum of Art and Archaeology of Columbia, Missouri (77.198) and the other in the Pilkington Glass Museum of St. Helens, England (SAHGM.1974/2); a parabolic bowl of unknown origin is in the Corning Museum of Glass (71.1.5); a parabolic bowl bought in Amlach, Iran is included in the Foroughi collection, Teheran; two twin hemispheric bowls likely from South Italy, in the Musée d'Arts et d'Histoire in Geneva (MF 3634); a parabolic bowl from a tomb in Mozdok (Caucasus) and a fragment found in Olbia (Black Sea) both preserved in the Hermitage, St. Petersburg (Kz 5323/5636; Op.1903.222); a fragment of *skyphos* likely from Italy, is in the Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York (23.160.76); one fragment bought in Egypt, previously preserved in the Golenischeff Collection, is today (likely) in the Archaeological Museum of Moscow; a shallow bowl from Tresilico is preserved in the Museo Archeologico Nazionale in Reggio Calabria (n. 6171); for some fragments found in Rhodes the place of conservation is at the moment unknown; an hemispheric bowl likely from Palestine once preserved in the Rothschild Collection (Paris) is now lost; two hemispheric bowls found in the "Tomba degli Ori" in Canosa are in the Museo Archeologico di Taranto (40.058; 40.059); a fragmentary hemispheric bowl from Gordion is preserved in the Yassihoyuk Museum, Turkey.
 - 3 Museo Archeologico Nazionale in Reggio Calabria (n. 6171); found in Tresilico, tomb 8, "fondo Chiese Carcate", in the area of Varapodio near Oppido Mamertina, Reggio Calabria: L. COSTAMAGNA, "Il terrazzo di Varapodio", in: L. Costamagna and P. Visonà (eds.), *Oppido Mamertina, Calabria, Italia: ricerche archeologiche nel territorio e in contrada Mella*, Rome 1999, 139–142.
 - 4 The authors (see n. 5) suggest that the fragment is preserved in the Archaeological Museum of Moscow, however a certain and exact collocation is not been found so far.

intent to localize the production in this technique, especially because they have more value compared to geometrical or vegetable motives.

1 The fragment with Egyptian temple

In the fragment preserved in the Pushkin Museum of Fine Arts (previously Golenischeff Collection), the central scene was likely bordered by a sequence of geometrical patterns of which only a line and a wave are preserved (like these on the Tresilico bowl). The view represented at the center shows a perspective of a temple in a typical Egyptian style (fig. 1), with roofing vault, colonnaded façade, and capitals in form of papyrus flowers. Between the central columns it is possible to identify a recess with, likely, an incense burner. In front of the façade there are two columns with hawk-statues on the top. On the left of the temple other elements are represented: the statue of a sphinx on a base, an altar and a tree. All these motives of clear Egyptian inspiration suggest that what remains was part of a wider Egyptian landscape.⁵



2 The bowl with hunting scene from Tresilico

The vessel from Tresilico⁶ is a whole shallow bowl characterized by an out-splayed rim, bended downward, and hemispherical bottom, slightly convex.⁷ The rim is decorated by a

5 M.I. ROSTOVZEFF, *The Social and Economic History of the Hellenistic World*, Oxford 1941, 373; M. CRISTOFANI, "La coppa di Tresilico", *Klearchos* 29-32 (1966), 63-79; A. ADRIANI, "Un Vetro dorato Alessandrino dal Caucaso", *Bulletin de la Société Archéologique d'Alexandrie* 42 (1967), 105-127 (mentioned); D.B. HARDEN, "The Canosa Group of Hellenistic Glasses in the British Museum", *JGS* 10 (1968), 38 (mentioned); A. CIANCIO, "I vetri alessandrini rinvenuti a Canosa", in: A. Riccardi, A. Ciancio and M. Chelotti (eds.), *Canosa*, Bari 1980, 32; S. H. AUTH, "Luxury glasses with Alexandrian motifs", *JGS* 25 (1983), 39-44.

6 Concerning the find: see note 3. G. MORETTI, "Antica tazza di vetro con figura e fregi d'oro", *BA* 7 (1913), 226-232; E. GALLI, "Riflessi di pittura alessandrina in Calabria", *Rivista del Reale Istituto di Archeologia e Storia dell'Arte* 6 (1937), 32-46; ROSTOVZEFF, *Social* (n. 5), 373; CRISTOFANI, "Coppa" (n. 5), 63-79; ADRIANI, "Vetro" (n. 5), 105-127 (mentioned); HARDEN, "Canosa" (n. 5), 32; CIANCIO, "Vetri" (n. 5), 32; A. VON SALDERN, *Antikes Glas*, Munich 2004, 120; R. AGOSTINO, "Coppa apoda vitrea (5.82)", in: F. Marzatico, R. Gebhard and P. Gleirscher (eds.), *Le grandi vie delle civiltà: relazioni e scambi fra Mediterraneo e il centro Europa dalla preistoria alla romanità*, Trento 2011, 20-21, 600-601.

7 d 16 cm; h 3.4 cm.

line, followed by a double wave between two lines. On the inside of the bowl a hunting scene is depicted (fig. 2), bordered by a meander of squares and swastikas, between two

simple lines. The scene takes place in a landscape synthetically represented by a tree, while the sense of depth is created drawing the line of the soil; few thin strokes give the idea of soil and grass. At the top we can see the principal group (occupying about two-thirds of the total space) with a hunter on horseback, dressed in the Greek manner, in the act of hurling a spear at a leopard. The animal is moving from the left

to the right and turns its head to the hunter.⁸ At the bottom, we can see a second scene with smaller figures, although in the first plane. We can recognize an archer, similarly dressed in the Greek manner, leaning against a trunk, while hitting two antelopes with an arrow. The beasts are running from the left to the right, followed by a dog. Both the rider and the archer have a crown on their heads, interpreted by Rostovzeff as a laurel oak.⁹ The location of the scene is completed by a palm, a tree and two birds. One is flying above the head of the rider and is interpreted by Rostovzeff as an eagle, likely representing the victory,¹⁰ while the other is flying above the tree.



3 Hunting scene: analysis of the iconographic subject

The hunting scenes are popular subjects, widespread in the time and in the space. In this occasion it will be not discussed in depth the genesis and development of this iconography, but the most meaningful steps will be briefly mentioned. The earliest examples are attested in Mesopotamia (Uruk, 3000 BC),¹¹ for instance the frieze from Assurbanipal's palace (British Museum, 7th c. BC), and reach the late antiquity, with several examples, including the Great and the Small Hunt of Piazza Armerina (4th c. AD).

The rider armed with a spear represents an old tradition also in Greek culture, starting from the classical times. It is represented on different media, including coins and pottery. This iconography was adopted by Alexander I, in particular for the coinage.¹² Focusing on the Macedonian hunts, we can observe a rich figural and literary documentation, mostly concerning Alexander the Great, who was author of the reworking of the ideological image

⁸ We can find this particular attitude of the prey (generally a lion) quite widespread in the hunting representations in Macedonia, as influence of the Achaemenid iconography: B. TRIPODI, *Cacce reali macedoni: tra Alessandro I e Filippo V*, Messina 1998, 69.

⁹ ROSTOVZEFF, *Social* (n. 5), 373.

¹⁰ ROSTOVZEFF, *Social* (n. 5), 373.

¹¹ TRIPODI, *Cacce* (n. 8), 87.

¹² TRIPODI, *Cacce* (n. 8), 20-34. See also: B. TRIPODI, "Il fregio della caccia della II tomba reale di Vergina e le cacce funerarie d'Oriente", *DHA* 17 (1991), 143-209.

of the king-hunter, of Achaemenid derivation.¹³ On this occasion particular attention is given to the painted frieze of “Philip’s II Tomb” in Vergina (second half of the 4th c. BC) because of its important significance and the possible link with the iconography of the Tresilico bowl.



3.1 The Macedonian model: the frieze of the “Tomb of Philip II”

The frieze (1.16 x 5.56 m) takes place on the façade of the Tomb II beneath the Great Tumulus at Vergina, unearthed in the 1977 by Manolis Andronikos. The fresco shows a complex composition of plural hunt in a wooded and rocky landscape (fig. 3). Ten hunters are participating: four are represented naked, three partially dressed, three fully dressed; seven are on foot and only three are on horseback. They are predominantly armed with spears, some dogs help them. They hunt two deer, a boar, a bear and a lion, “the typical Bestiario in the representation of big game hunting”.¹⁴

Observers are instantly attracted to the central figure. It is a young rider, beardless, with a vegetable crown (maybe laurel oak) on his head, dressed with a *chiton*. He grips a spear in the right hand, and with the left one he holds the reins, restraining the horse. He is depicted in the act of hurling a spear at a lion at the right side, which is surrounded by two hunters half-naked on foot and a bearded rider. The lion seems to be the second prey for the young hunter, who is riding to the right, in the direction of the lion, probably after he killed the boar behind his back with the first spear. Exactly this movement, from the geometrical center of the composition to the thematic one (represented by the lion-hunting, the royal prey for definition),¹⁵ emphasizes the importance of the character. His centrality is stressed by the vegetable crown, which shows the status of excellence, distinguishing him from the others.¹⁶ Furthermore, the position is exactly central and is highlighted by two trees, vertical elements behind and in front of him, and the stone under the hind legs of the reared up horse.¹⁷

13 TRIPODI, *Cacce* (n. 8), 37–52, 104–105.

14 TRIPODI, *Cacce* (n. 8), 104.

15 Concerning the meaning of the lion hunt: TRIPODI, “Fregio” (n. 12), 179–181.

16 TRIPODI, *Cacce* (n. 8), 102.

17 See also the “Alexander mosaic” in Pompeii, house of the Faun. In the opinion of Andronikos, the original fresco, at which the mosaic is inspired, was realized by the same author as the frieze in the “Philipp’s Tomb”: M. ANDRONICOS, *Vergina: The Royal Tombs and the Ancient City*, Athens 1989,

In Macedonia, the boar represented par excellence the prey of the initiation of hunting. Hegesandros (quoted by Athenaeus) wrote that this kind of hunt constituted a rite of passage for a young aristocrat, giving him the right to eat lying on the couch.¹⁸ On this basis, we can read the scene as the moment immediately after the initiation, when the youth enters among the *andres* and can join the royalty, ideally represented by the lion-hunting, at the moment the exclusive right of the bearded rider. This intermediate position, showing a passage, creates a favorable relationship between them, interpretable as a dynastic link.¹⁹

Beyond the different interpretations given by Andronikos (the discoverer of the Tomb), who recognizes the riders as the young Alexander the Great and his father Philip II,²⁰ and by Tripodi, who prefers the identities of Alexander IV and Philip III,²¹ it is interesting to notice the resemblance between the central character in the frieze and the rider of the Tre-silico's bowl. Apart from the exact identification, this iconography is clearly derived from the model developed by Alexander, who elaborated the idea of the warrior-hunter in an image of power, and also adopted the plural hunt iconography typical of the East.²² This was in a second moment adopted by the Diadochi, that underlined through the iconographical recovery the legitimacy of their reign.²³

3.2 The comparison

In both the representations, on the bowl and on the frieze, the horse is painted half-face, turned to the right and reared up. The rider, dressed in the Greek manner with a short *chiton*, holds a spear in the right hand, raised behind his head. This movement requires the rotation of the chest and therefore, the rider looks at the spectator. On the bowl, the somatic features are not recognizable because of the synthetic style of the drawing. Even so we are able to note clearly a crown on his head, like in the frieze. Although we cannot assert whether the artist of the bowl understood its significance, or wanted to evoke a clear iconographical model, through the crown, this detail, together with the precise recall of the posture of both the horse and the rider, allows us to think that the bowl's scheme descends from a Macedonian model. This model was probably precisely that of Vergina's frieze, which seems to be the only other representation known to this day with a vegetable crown

115-117. According to this interpretation, Philoxenus of Eretria would have painted the hunting scene about twenty years before the fresco, commissioned by Cassander, representing the battle between Alexander and Darius at Issus: TRIPODI, *Cacce* (n. 8), 56.

18 Ath. I 31.

19 TRIPODI, *Cacce* (n. 8), 57, 106.

20 ANDRONICOS, *Vergina* (n. 17). This identification is also shared by Moreno, who although recognizes in the hunt-painting the hand of Nicias: P. MORENO, "Pittura in Grecia dalla maniera alla restaurazione romana (323-31 a. C.)", in: M. Torelli (ed.), *Meeting between Cultures in the Ancient Mediterranean: Proceedings of the XVII International Congress of Classical Archaeology, AIAC, Rome, FAO, 22-26 September 2008, a cura di Mario Torelli, Bollettino di Archeologia Online*, Volume speciale, I (2010), 106.

21 TRIPODI, *Cacce* (n. 8), 106-109. For a complete digression about the two different interpretations: M.B. HATZOPOULOS, "The Burial of the Dead (at Vergina) or the Unending Controversy on the Identity of the Occupants of Tomb II", *Tekmeria* 9 (2008), 91-118.

22 TRIPODI, "Fregio" (n. 12), 174-176.

23 TRIPODI, *Cacce* (n. 8), 62, 80, 113-114; P. BRIANT, "Chasses royales macédoniennes et chasses royales perses: le thème de la chasse au lion sur la chasse de Vergina", *DHA* 17 (1991), 222-225.

on the rider's head. The presence of exotic animals instead of a boar, deer, bear and lion, leads us to suppose that this model was reworked in another context, maybe with the help of other supports such as paintings or sculptures.

3.3 *The new elements*

Leopard and antelopes, preys portrayed on the Tresilico bowl, are part of the African landscape and do not appear in the Macedonian hunt's representation. Antelope hunting recurs in the Nile mosaic from Palestrina.²⁴ Galli read it as a typical African theme, precisely from Ethiopia.²⁵ Also the leopard has a strong link with the same environment, above all with Egypt. Here, starting from the 1st dynasty, the goddess Mafdet with leopard features appeared in the Pantheon. In the Greek mythology, the leopards are firstly attested in relationship with Dionysus, as they pull his chariot.²⁶ Precisely this god, according to the myth, spent a part of his life in Egypt and had a particular link with the Ptolemaic dynasty.²⁷ Winged leopards pulling a chariot are shown also in a fragment of a fresco in a chapel dedicated to the dynastic cult of Alexander the Great, in Kom Madi (Faiyum), dated at the 1st c. BC.²⁸

3.4 *Ptolemaic tradition through the written sources and the Roman copies*

The coexistence of both typically Greek and Egyptian-African elements suggest an iconographical elaboration in the context of the Ptolemaic court. Here, the contact between different influences yielded a peculiar fusion. Some newly elaborated representations have not survived, but they were surely existing. Two Roman copies and a passage from Pliny the Elder recalling the "*Ptolemaeus venans*", a masterpiece of the Alexandrian painter Antiphilus, representing Ptolemy I hunting can be considered a proof of this phenomenon. Although we do not have the original, the Alexandrian artist was likely aware of the Macedonian Royal iconography and the same models circulated at the Ptolemaic court.²⁹ A useful tool to document this trend is offered by two Roman copies: a fresco from Stabia (Rustic villa of Gragnano)³⁰ and a mosaic from a villa in Setif (Tunisia).³¹ They both appear to be an echo of the famous Ptolemaic painting.

24 F. COARELLI, "La pompé di Tolomeo Filadelfo e il mosaico di Palestrina", *Ktema* 15 (1990), 235–251: in the mosaic a rider is portrayed, but in its upper part two archers on foot, following an antelope, are depicted.

25 GALLI, "Riflessi" (n. 6), 34.

26 The god, in some representations, is portrayed riding a leopard, as in the mosaic from Pella: W.A. DASZEWSKI, *Corpus of mosaics from Egypt, I: Hellenistic and early Roman period*, Mainz 1985, pl. 7b.

27 S.-A. ASHTON, *The Last Queens of Egypt*, Harlow 2003, 19; see also the description of the Ptolemy II Philadelphus' procession: ATH. V 25–35.

28 A.K. BOWMAN, *Egypt after the Pharaohs: 332 BC-AD 642: from Alexander to the Arab Conquest*, London 1986, 8.

29 P. MORENO, *Alessandro Magno: immagini come storia*, Rome 2004, 131. The painter was also operative at the court of Philipp II: H. BRUNN, *Geschichte der griechischen Künstler*, II.1, Braunschweig 1859, 248–249.

30 MORENO, *Alessandro* (n. 29), 131, fig. 195; MORENO, "Pittura" (n. 20), 105, fig. 84, 106.

31 MORENO, *Alessandro* (n. 29), 123–132, 130, fig. 194; M. DONDERER, "Dionysos und Ptolemaios Sôter als Meleager: zwei Gemälde des Antiphilos", *ZPE* 73 (1988), 781–799, pl. 1–2; P. MORENO, "Elementi di pittura ellenistica", in: *L'Italie méridionale et les premières expériences de la peinture hellénistique*:

The king, on foot, in the act of hitting a boar, must recall the character portrayed, in the same position (the posture of attack, typical of the Meleager representations), on the right side of the Vergina frieze.³² Dressed only with a *kausia* and a cape, he assumes a particular importance, helping the bearded rider to hunt the lion, between him and the young rider. We can probably recognize in this character the young Ptolemy, one of the best generals of Philip and Alexander.³³ The late Roman copies, not only confirm what was written by Pliny, but also allow us to suppose the arrival of Macedonian cartoons at the Ptolemaic court. Here, the former model was possibly modified, maybe later, setting the scene in an exotic environment. The lacking knowledge of the Alexandrian painting prevents us from finding a link between the Macedonian model and the new version.³⁴ The arrival in Egypt of cartoons and/or master craftsmen from Macedonia could explain the punctual iconographical quotation, in the representations of the hunter on foot in the late copies of the *Ptolemaeus venans* and of the hunter on horseback, on the Tresilico bowl.

It is worth to mention that the decoration with the hunting scene is a popular subject also on Hellenistic faience, in particular with hunters on foot or on horseback hunting antelopes and felines.³⁵ The riders are commonly represented with short *chiton*, *chlamys* and spear in the right hand, proving the total acquisition of the Hellenistic-Macedonian model. On the other side, the animals evoke, as on the Tresilico bowl, an exotic location. Moreover, the faience bowls attest the assimilation in Ptolemaic Egypt of the Macedonian scheme, reinterpreted with the addition of local elements and adopted also by serial productions. The success in Alexandria of the iconographic scheme of the rider on reared up horse can be noted also through a painted frieze in the Tomb I, in the cemetery of Mustafa Pasha.³⁶ A mosaic portraying two Erotes hunting an antelope from Shatbi (Alexandria, today preserved in the Greco-Roman Museum) quotes the mosaics from Pella, confirming the widespread diffusion of Macedonian models in the Ptolemaic capital.³⁷

3.5 The hunt iconography by the Diadochi and the Hellenistic aristocracy

The theme of leopard hunting occurs in the frescoes of a tomb, datable to the period after the Ptolemaic reconstruction, in Mareshah, a flourishing colony of Hellenized Sidonians and capital of Idumaea in Hellenistic times.³⁸ Among several caves in the Necropolis near the *tell* ascribed to the Sidonians, there are two tombs of particular interest.³⁹ Tomb I is the

Actes de la table ronde (Rome, 18 février 1994), Rome 1998, 53, fig. 45; MORENO, "Pittura" (n. 20), fig. 85, 105, 106.

32 MORENO, "Pittura" (n. 20).

33 MORENO, *Alessandro* (n. 29), 131.

34 B.R. BROWN, *Ptolemaic Paintings and Mosaics and the Alexandrian Style*, Cambridge, MA 1957, 1: generally considered as landscape painting, with bucolic or Nile scene, impressionistic and perspective effects.

35 M.D. NENNA and M. SEIF EL-DIN, *Le vaseille en faïence d'époque gréco-romaine: catalogue du Musée gréco-romain d'Alexandrie*, Cairo 2000, 84–88.

36 MORENO, "Elementi" (n. 31), 36, 39, fig. 32.

37 MORENO, *Alessandro* (n. 29), 68, fig. 90; BROWN, *Ptolemaic* (n. 34), Pl. XLIV.

38 P. MCKECHNIE and P. GUILLAUME, *Ptolemy II Philadelphus and his World*, Leiden 2008, 173; M. AVI-YONAH and A. KLONER, "Mareshah", in: E. Stern (ed.), *The New Encyclopedia of Archaeological Excavations in the Holy Land (NEAHL)*, Jerusalem/New York/London 1993, 948–957.

39 Tomb I and II: J. P. PETERS and H. THIERSCH, *Painted Tombs in the Necropolis of Marissa (Marêshah)*,

major and the most richly decorated. Some inscriptions seem to refer to the years I-IV of the Ptolemaic reign.⁴⁰ A frieze with hunting scene stands out among the painted decorations. Here are recognizable, besides the leopard of the main scene, a lot of exotic animals recalling the Egyptian environment: a giraffe, an elephant, a crocodile, an ibis, an antelope, a rhino and a hippopotamus. Most of them are associated with Greek inscriptions explaining the species. Others are fantastic animals.

The focal point of this frieze is the scene portraying the rider, whose face is not preserved (removed by the Iconoclasts), and the leopard. Both the figures are characterized for the precision of the style and the extreme naturalism (as we can even recognize the breast-feeding state of the female leopard).⁴¹ The posture of both the rider, dressed in the Greek manner and in the act of hurling a spear, and of the reared up horse evokes the Tresilico's bowl. Different is the attitude of the leopard, in the tomb painted in front of the rider, rearing up, stabbed by a spear and attacked at the back by a dog. On the bowl, the leopard is portrayed running in the opposite direction and turning its head to the rider. Rostovzeff recognized in the fresco a typical Alexandrian style, but it seems that this observation is due to its affinity with the Tresilico's bowl, supposed to be of Alexandrian origin.⁴²

Concerning the representation of real animals in the tombs of Mareshah, Avi-Yonah suggests an influence of the zoological garden of the Ptolemies in Alexandria, of which several artistic reproductions should exist in the capital.⁴³ The aim of remembering the African landscape is notable through the figure of the elephant, today not anymore clearly readable, of which is also preserved the Greek inscription: ΑΙΘΙΟΠΙΑ (Ethiopia), clearly referring to Africa. As a whole, the painted tombs of Mareshah proved the great influence of the Hellenistic art in the rural districts of Palestine under the Ptolemaic reign.⁴⁴ This iconography, represented in an aristocratic tomb confirms the "noble" origin of these cartoons, which allowed the circulation of the iconography, probably spreading a precise social and political message of power-legitimacy by the Diadochi.

The comparison with the sarcophagus of Abdalonymus, King of Sidon (died in 311 BC), discovered in 1887 in the Royal Necropolis of Sidon, today preserved in the Archaeological Museum of Istanbul and dated to the end of the 4th c. BC is also interesting.⁴⁵ On the front is represented a war-scene, referring to the victory of Alexander (recognizable because of the lion-helmet) against Darius in the battle of Issus, which opened the way to

London 1905; AVI-YONAH and KLONER, "Mareshah" (n. 38), 948–957; D.M. JACOBSON, *The Hellenistic Paintings of Marisa*, Leeds 2007.

40 JACOBSON, *Hellenistic* (n. 39), 22.

41 JACOBSON, *Hellenistic* (n. 39), 25–27.

42 ROSTOVZEFF, *Social* (n. 5), 520.

43 AVI-YONAH and KLONER, *Mareshah* (n.38), 955, however referring to Tomb II.

44 AVI-YONAH and KLONER, *Mareshah* (n. 38), 956; JACOBSON, *Hellenistic* (n. 39), 16; for Alexandrian necropolis, for instance the Hypogeum A and B in Chatby (about 250 B.C.) and others in the necropolis of Hadra (3rd c. BC) cfr.: J. MCKENZIE, *The Architecture of Petra*, Oxford 1990, 63–64, 68, 94–95, 123–124; M.S. VENIT, *Monumental Tombs of Ancient Alexandria: The Theater of the Dead*, Cambridge 2002, 24–34, 192–193; A. ADRIANI, "La Magna Grecia nel quadro dell'arte ellenistica", in: *La Magna Grecia nel mondo ellenistico: atti del nono Convegno di studi sulla Magna Grecia Taranto, 5–10 ottobre 1969*, Naples 1970, n. 60–67, 110–112; n. 77–78, 123–124; n. 79–80, 124–126.

45 K. SCHEFOLD, *Der Alexander-Sarkophag*, Berlin 1968, 9; MORENO, *Alessandro* (n. 29), fig. 185, 124, 226–232.

the conquests in the East,⁴⁶ a decisive episode for the successors of Alexander and significantly represented.⁴⁷ On the back is represented a lion hunt, an episode of the life of Abdalonymus. The sculptor in this case is faithful to the traditional model of the big game hunt, with meaning of initiation. It must be noted that the protagonist of both sides is Alexander, to whom Abdalonymus showed gratitude, because he received the power thank to him.⁴⁸

An echo in the entourage of the Diadochi was also represented in the *ex-voto* of Craterus, realized by Lysippos, in the sanctuary of Delphi, telling the episode in which the general saved Alexander's life. The lost masterpiece is remembered by a relief-base from Messene (today Louvre, Paris).⁴⁹

4 An iconography of long tradition

Numerous are the reprises of this model in Roman times, but we have to remember that they are inspired by the traditional Macedonian model with boar or lion hunting.⁵⁰ A comparison can be made also with a late-Roman example: the gold-glass "plate of Alexander", a rare specimen almost intact and preserved in the Cleveland Museum.⁵¹ This object shows on the bottom a hunting scene, created with gold foil and red paint.⁵² A rider is portrayed, dressed in the Greek manner, with a spear in the right hand, while chasing two stags. He is interpreted as Alexander thanks to the inscription. Below the horse legs is represented an archer with a dog, while a boar is running in their direction. The style and the spatial composition are clearly late and possibly the dish can be dated to the Late Antiquity (end of the 3rd century, basing the similarity with the contemporary portrays).⁵³ Considering the geographical and chronological widespread diffusion of the iconography of the hunter on horseback, a direct link between the quoted examples cannot be affirmed. However, in the dish of Alexander the traditional model of the boar and deer-hunting is respected, as generally shown in the Macedonian hunting scene, probably because of its derivation from a Greek original work.⁵⁴

5 Conclusions

Although the elements available to perform an iconographical study are scarce, the co-existence of the Macedonian model and African elements is suggestive. Such a combination allows us to suppose the existence of a modified version of the iconography of the hunter

46 SCHEFOLD, *Alexander-Sarkophag* (n. 45), 5; V. VON GRAEVE, *Der Alexandersarkophag und seine Werkstatt*, Frankfurt am Main 1970, 50–56; MORENO, *Alessandro* (n. 29), 292–294.

47 SCHEFOLD, *Alexander-Sarkophag* (n. 45), 5.

48 MORENO, *Alessandro* (n. 29), 228.

49 P. MORENO, *Lisippo: L'arte e la fortuna*, Milan 1995.

50 Quoting just a few examples: a fragment of plaster work, preserved in the Museum of Cairo, depicting a hunting scene in a rocky landscape; a silver dish from Karnak, both recalled in: A. ADRIANI, *Divagazioni intorno ad una coppa paesistica del Museo di Alessandria*, Rome 1959, 18.

51 In the upper part of the bottom, over the hunting scene, appears the inscription: "ALEXANDER HOMO FELIX PIE ZESES CVM TVIS".

52 J.D. COONEY, "The Gold-Glass Alexander Plate", *The Bulletin of the Cleveland Museum of Art* 56 (1969), 255.

53 COONEY, "Gold-Glass" (n. 52), 252–261.

54 TRIPODI, *Cacce* (n. 8).

on horseback, dear to Alexander and adopted by one of his Diadochi, Ptolemy I. In the contest of the study concerning the Sandwich Gold-Glasses, this thesis could be determinant to support a possible Alexandrian production. Such a thesis was asserted in the past, but on the basis of scarce data: the fame of Alexandria for the luxury handwork, remembered by the ancient sources; a passage of uncertain interpretation from Athenaeus of Naucratis;⁵⁵ and the resemblance of the bowls decorated with geometrical and vegetable motives, with the presumed Alexandrian toreutics.⁵⁶ Although at the present state of the art it is not possible to prove the provenance the Sandwich Gold-Glass production,⁵⁷ it is curious that both the specimens with figurative decoration recall Egypt. A third example can be quoted: the bottom of a bowl, called in literature “Graf Medallion” (today lost), likely depicting an allegorical representation of Alexandria.⁵⁸ This Egyptianizing taste, together with the fact that both the Graf Medallion and the Golenischeff fragment were found in Egypt were taken by Adriani as proof of the existence of an Alexandrian production of Sandwich Gold-Glasses.⁵⁹

On the other side, the discovery in a rich tomb at Tresilico, near Reggio Calabria, of the bowl is not surprising, for the commercial links between Alexandria and the Magna Graecia and the close links between the local aristocracy and the Ptolemaic dynasty.⁶⁰ The same tomb has also yielded a pair of gold earrings with the shape of an antelope head, a subject suggesting an Alexandrian origin. At the moment we could just propose as suggestion, that Alexandria was one of the few productive centers of Sandwich Gold-Glasses in the East-Mediterranean space, maybe specialized in figurative decoration.⁶¹

55 Ath. V 30.

56 HARDEN, “Canosa” (n. 5), 21–47.

57 It is plausible that some few specialized manufactures were located in the East-Mediterranean. One of these was likely in Rhodes: G.D. WEINBERG, “Glass manufacture in Hellenistic Rhodes”, *AD* 24 (1969), 143–151; P. Triantafyllides, “New Evidence of the glass manufacture in Classical and Hellenistic Rhodes”, in: *Annales du 14e Congrès de l’Association Internationale pour l’Histoire du Verre*, 2000, 30–34.

58 ADRIANI, “Vetro” (n. 5), 122.

59 ADRIANI, “Vetro” (n. 5), 105–122.

60 E. GHISELLINI, “Una testa femminile alessandrina da Egnazia: considerazioni sui rapporti tra l’Apulia e l’Egitto tolemaico”, *XAnt* 2 (1993), 45–70.

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Athens, Alexander and the Family of Memnon of Rhodes: Some Notes on a New Interpretation of so-called “Memnon’s Decree”*

Eduard Rung (Kazan)

After the fall of the Achaemenid Empire and the death of King Darius III, when Alexander the Great was going to or even already started to conquer India, a very interesting document appeared in Athens. This is the decree of the Athenian Assembly, dating to the archon of Hegemon (327/6 BC) and granting the honours to a person related to a Persian family (*IG* II² 356; *Tod*. II² 199; *GHI* 98; Schwenk 58; *IG* II³ 1. 361). The stone on which the document was inscribed is stored now at the Epigraphic Museum in Athens (EM 2662); its photocopy has recently been published by Stephen Lambert.¹ This is a *stoichedon* inscription with lines of 20 letters, but with some irregularities in 1–2 letters.

Before Lambert’s recent correction it was a *communis opinio* that the honoured person was Memnon, otherwise unknown and non-identical with prominent Memnon of Rhodes, the Persian general. Therefore, the decree has been long known as Memnon’s. About a century ago the *editor princeps* of this inscription J. Kirchner restored M[ἐν]μῶ[v] in the line 11 of the decree where he read the name of Memnon (*IG* II² 356). However, this scholar was not able to restore ethnic and/or patronymic of the honorand in the lines, which, as Kirchner considered, were related to the name. Some problems, epigraphic as well as historical, arise from his suggestions.

Kirchner’s restoration has commonly been supported by some other scholars who accepted this view in their subsequent publications and examinations of the inscription. Simultaneously, several suggestions have been put forward in the past concerning a person who was honoured by the Athenians. W. Tarn and W. Heckel considered him a son of Thymondas and grandson of Mentor.² H. Berve and M. Tod believed that he had been a son of Memnon of Rhodes.³ P. Brunt. P. Rhodes and R. Osborne suggested that the person of

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- 1 S.D. LAMBERT, “Athenian State Laws and Decrees, 352/1–322/1: III Decrees Honouring Foreigners. B. Other Awards”, *ZPE* 159 (2007), 147, fig. 32. The squeeze of the inscription in high definition has been generously sent to me by Charles Crowther from CSAD.
- 2 W.W. TARN, “Heracles Son of Barsine”, *JHS* 41 (1921), 24; W. HECKEL, *Who’s Who in the Age of Alexander the Great? Prosopography of Alexander’s Empire*, Malden/Oxford 2006, 162, 267.
- 3 H. BERVE, *Das Alexanderreich auf prosopographischer Grundlage*, II, Munich 1926, 253–254, no. 498; M.N. TOD, *A Selection of Greek Historical Inscriptions, II: From 403 to 323 B.C.*, Oxford 1948, 282.

this decree had been a son of Artabazus and grandson of Pharnabazus.⁴ E. Badian came to an unexpected assumption. He believed that the Athenians had awarded Memnon appointed by Alexander a governor in Thrace.⁵ According to the sources, this Memnon led the revolt with the support of the local population (D.S. XVII 62.5-6), but then reconciled with Alexander and brought him reinforcements to India in 326 BC (Curt. IX 3.21). Badian suggested that he had belonged to the family of Memnon of Rhodes. However “other” Memnon’s contact with the Athenians remains hypothetical and even unlikely.

Recently Lambert came to simple and interesting suggestion that a reading of Memnon’s name in the decree was incorrect and the document would have included the name not of a honorand but of a proposer in the line 11. As Lambert notes the honorand of the document should have been considered Thymondas son of Mentor who was mentioned in the line 30.⁶ This conclusion was ultimately achieved by means of comparing this document with others related to same period. But Lambert himself was not able to offer a name of the decree’s proposer in the line 11.

Lambert’s suggestion, however, still has not been appreciated in the literature. In my opinion, his argument seems to be relevant not only on epigraphical considerations but also on historical ones. Meanwhile the historical interpretation of the decree may be necessary since there are some propositions in the literature relating to the significance of the decree. So, Marcus Tod stated: “It is interesting to find Athens in 327 honouring a member of a family which had rendered such distinguished services to the Persian cause”.⁷ W. Heckel supposes that the Athenian decree for Memnon was not a reflection of enmity toward Alexander:

“If we are dealing with a relative of Barsine, the year is significant, since it was in 327 that Barsine was sent back to coastal Asia Minor, where she bore Alexander’s son, Heracles. Athens was almost certainly attempting to curry favor with Alexander by means of the decree for Memnon”.⁸

So, the scholars pay attention to the historical significance of the document while considering it a decree for Memnon, but none of them (including Stephen Lambert) considered the historical circumstances of the decree in the connection with a new interpretation. In this paper I am going to consider scholarly interpretations of the decree without and with Lambert’s correction since his opinion needs to be analysed not only with epigraphical but also with historical arguments.

As it was said some scholars identified the honoured person of the decree as Memnon son of Thymondas and grandson of Mentor.⁹ This hypothesis explains the references in the

4 P.A. BRUNT, “Alexander, Barsine and Heracles”, *RFIC* 103 (1975), 26–27; P.J. RHODES and R. OSBORNE, *Greek Historical Inscriptions 404–323 B.C.*, Oxford 2003, 508.

5 E. BADIAN, “Agis III”, *Hermes* 95 (1967), 179–180.

6 S.D. LAMBERT, “Inscribing the Past in Fourth Century Athens”, in: J. Marincola, L. Lewellyn-Jones and C. Maciver (eds), *Greek Notions of the Past in Archaic and Classical Eras: History without Historians*, Edinburgh 2012, 262; S.D. LAMBERT, *Inscribed Athenian Laws and Decrees 352/1–322/1 BC: Epigraphical Essays*, Leiden 2012, 404.

7 TOD, Selection (n. 3), 284.

8 HECKEL, *Who’s* (n. 2), 162.

9 TARN, “Heracles” (n. 2), 24; HECKEL, *Who’s* (n. 2), 162, 267.

decree to Artabazus and Pharnabazus as well as to Thymondas and Mentor as Memnon's relatives. But this conclusion seems to be very improbable. It is unknown if Thymondas ever had any son. In the last case his son was not an adult in the year of the decree, in 327/6 BC – Curtius (III 3.1) says of Thymondas as of a young man in 334/333 BC (*iuvenis*). W. Schwahn proposed that Thymondas was born ca 355 BC.¹⁰ Demosthenes (XXIII 157) in his speech *In Aristocratem* (352 BC) describes Mentor and Memnon as “young men” – ἄνθρωποι νέοι. Thus, in the year of the decree, Thymondas, son of Mentor would have been too young to have an adult son. So, if one supports the opinion that the Athenians honoured a son of Thymondas, it is necessary to agree that the people granted honours to a child. But this conclusion seems to be impossible at all.

Other scholars supposed that the Athenians had granted honours to Memnon son of Memnon of Rhodes.¹¹ This opinion seems to be more acceptable. (a) Memnon as son of Memnon and Barsine could have been considered descendant of Pharnabazus and Artabazus and, (b) the sources attest that Memnon of Rhodes really had some adult sons in the time of Alexander's campaign. Arrian (*An.* I 15.2) reports of Memnon and his sons as those who fought against Alexander the Great in the battle of Granicus (τε Μέμνωνος παῖδες καὶ αὐτὸς Μέμνων μετὰ τούτων ἐκινδύνευε). But the difficulties do not disappear. (a) The names of Memnon's sons are not mentioned by Arrian, and it is impossible to say if Memnon of Rhodes had any son named also Memnon. (b) It is also uncertain if all adult sons of Memnon were born of Barsine and became thereby descendants of both Persian satraps.¹² Of course, Memnon of Rhodes had at least one son from Barsine, but this his son could not have been honoured by the Athenians because he was not adult at the time of the decree. Curtius (III 13.14) reports of Alexander's capture in Damascus of wife and son of Pharnabazus, of three daughters of Mentor, of wife and son of Memnon (*Memnonis coniunx et filius*) – possibly the historian refers to Barsine and Memnon's small son. (c) If true that the Athenians have honoured Memnon son of Memnon, it is not clear why they in the decree specifically referred to Thymondas and his father Mentor.

Finally there is the opinion that the Athenians granted honours to Memnon son of Artabazus.¹³ Demosthenes (XXIII 157) says of Mentor and Memnon as sons-in-law of Artabazus, and Diodorus (XVI 50.3-4) tells of Artabazus' marriage to their sister who bore to him eleven sons and ten daughters. Curtius (VI 5.1-10) mentions nine sons of Artabazus who surrendered to Alexander in Hyrcania, however, Arrian (*An.* III 23.7-9) calls three of them (Cophen, Ariobarzanes, Arsames), and it is clear from his report that they all bore Persian names. The question is whether one of sons of Artabazus may have been named Memnon (though Curtius III 13.13 states that another son bore a rare Greek name Illioneus)? If one considers that the Athenians granted honours to a son of Artabazus, this explains why the inscription does refer to Artabazus and Pharnabazus, but it is still unclear why it refers to Thymondas and Mentor. That is why Lambert's correction is most probable from historical

10 W. SCHWAHN, “Thymondas”, *RE* XI.2 (1936), 716–717.

11 BERVE, *Alexanderreich* (n. 3), 253–254, no. 498; TOD, *Selection* (n. 3), 282.

12 Barsine could give birth a child of Memnon only after the death of Mentor, Memnon's brother and Barsine's first husband (ca. 340 BC). So Memnon's sons who fought at Granicus certainly were not born from Barsine.

13 BRUNT, “Alexander” (n. 4), 26–27; RHODES and OSBORNE, *Greek* (n. 4), 508.

viewpoint. If the Athenians honoured Thymondas, all difficulties disappear. Thymondas was the son of Mentor, so the references to his ancestors (οἱ πρόγονοι) in the decree were relevant in this particular context. Of course, one cannot be certain if Thymondas was a son of Mentor from Barsine, Artabazus' daughter. But surely Thymondas can have been related to Pharnabazus and Artabazus through Artabazus' wife who was a sister of Mentor and Memnon (D.S. XVI 52.4).

Now one needs to consider the issue of Thymondas' possible relations with Athens and the historical circumstances of the decree. Let me briefly outline the relations between Pharnabazus, Artabazus, Mentor and the Athenians reported by the inscription. First, the context for these relations is military. The decree states that "Pharnabazus and Artabazus continued to benefit the Athenian People and were useful to the People in the wars" – οἱ π[ρ]όγονοι [Φα]ρν[ά]β[α]ζος καὶ Ἀρ[τά]βαζος | δι]ετέλουν τὸν δῆμον [τὸν | Ἀθ]ηναίων εὐεργετοῦν[τε]ς καὶ χρήσιμοι ὄντες ἐν [τ]οῖς πολέμοις τῶι δήμῳ (lines 24-29; transl. by S.D. Lambert). As for Pharnabazus, the Athenians certainly referred to his cooperation with them during the Corinthian war when the satrap effectively had assisted them against Sparta on the sea in 394–393 BC and had negotiated a treaty with the Corinthian alliance (a symbol of the cooperation was the ritual dress which Pharnabazus later gifted to the Athenians).¹⁴ The question of Athenian cooperation with Artabazus is more complicated. Stephen Lambert, for example, assumes that the decree may have hinted at Artabazus' cooperation with the Athenian Chares in the 350s.¹⁵ Indeed the Athenians assisted Artabazus with the mercenaries in his war against the King,¹⁶ but the decree describes a different situation. So, it may be proposed that Artabazus provided the Athenians with some kind of assistance (military, diplomatic or financial) in the Social war, prior to before Chares' involvement in the revolt. So, the document certainly refers to two military events in the chronological order from the recent past of Athens defining them as πόλεμοι, Corinthian and Social Wars.

As for Mentor, Thymondas' father, the decree says that he "rescued the Greeks who were campaigning in Egypt, when Egypt was captured by the Persians" – [κ]αὶ ὁ πατήρ Θυμώνδου Μέ[ν]τωρ τοὺς ἐν Αἰγύπτῳ στρ[α]τιγεγόμενους τῶν Ἑλλήνων | [ἔ]σωσεν, ὅτε ἦλθ [Α]ἰγύπτ[ο]ς ὑπὸ Περσῶν (lines 30–34; tr. by S.D. Lambert). The reference is here to Mentor's services not specifically to Athenians, but to all Greeks, with a Panhellenistic overtone. Besides, these lines of the inscription definitely relate to the actual events – the surrender of Greek mercenaries arranged by Mentor at Bubastus in Egypt (D.S. XVI 50.1–8). As we know, the Egyptian army of Nectanebo included many Greek mercenaries, and Athenians surely were among them too.¹⁷

But the Athenian references to their earlier contacts with the Persians and their commanders may have not only ideological significance, as it was noted by Lambert, but would be associated with Thymondas more immediately. The selection of historical examples in

14 Cf., for example: X. *HG* IV 8.8; D.S. XIV 84.5; *IG* II² 1421, IV 37; 1428, II 143.

15 LAMBERT, "Inscribing" (n. 6), 262.

16 D.S. XVI 22.1–2; 34.1–2; *FGrH* 105. F. 1; *Schol. D.* III.146a; IV.84b; Cf. R.A. MOYSEY, "Chares and Athenian Foreign Policy", *CJ* 80 (1985), 221–227.

17 20,000 Greek mercenaries: D.S. XVI 47.6. As for the Athenians that they were commanded by Diophantus (D.S. XVI 48.1). On the Greeks in the Egyptian service at that period see: H.W. PARKE, *Greek Mercenary Soldiers: From the Earliest Times to the Battle of Ipsus*, Oxford, 1933, 167.

the inscription should not be considered accidental. It is remarkable that Thymondas, as his noble Persian ancestors, was a military commander too, and, like them, he campaigned against enemies of Athens (now that was Alexander). Referring to wars in which Pharnabazus and Artabazus were useful to them, the Athenians hinted at Thymondas' participation in the Persian war against Alexander. The reference to Mentor's role in Egypt had another meaning since it may be remembered that Thymondas was related to Egypt where he fled after the battle of Issus (Arr. *An.* II 13.2).

Some Thymondas' activity was recorded by our sources. Arrian (*An.* II 2.1) and Curtius (III 3.1) mention him as the person who received the Greek mercenaries from Pharnabazus, son of Artabazus after the death of Memnon. Curtius (III 8.1; 9.2) says that Thymondas headed 30,000 mercenaries in the battle of Issus.¹⁸ Arrian (*An.* II 13.2) records his fate after the battle:

“But Amyntas son of Antiochus, Thymondas son of Mentor, Aristomedes the Pheraean, and Bianor the Acarnanian, all being deserters, fled without delay from the posts assigned them in the battle, with about 8,000 soldiers under their command, and passing through the mountains, they arrived at Tripolis in Phoenicia. There they seized the ships which had been hauled up on shore in which they had previously been transported from Lesbos; they launched as many of these vessel as they thought sufficient to convey them, and the rest they burnt there in the docks, in order not to supply their enemy with the means of quickly pursuing them. They fled first to Cyprus, thence to Egypt...” (transl. by H.W. Sage)

Thymondas does not appear any more in the sources. But after Thymondas fled to Egypt he had two alternatives. So, he could have gone to Athens and bring the Athenian mercenaries of Darius back home. It could be cause for bestowing honours on him by the Athenians in their decree. However, if one takes this suggestion, the time interval between Thymondas' retreat from the battlefield of Issus (333 BC) and the Athenian decree (327/6 BC) seems to have been too long.

Another suggestion is more attractive. Thymondas could have joined with Darius' army, which was assembling to fight at Gaugamela against Alexander. Arrian (*An.* III 11.7), describing the Persian preparation for the battle, refers to some Greek mercenaries of Darius (οἱ δὲ Ἑλλήνες οἱ μισθοφόροι παρὰ Δαρεῖόν), but he does not mention the name of their general (but they probably were the same mercenaries who had fled from Issus and had been commanded by Thymondas).¹⁹ But if Thymondas returned to Darius and fought at

18 On the number of Greek mercenaries of Darius at Issus see Arr. *An.* II 8.6; Callisthenes, *FGrH* 124 F.35 = Pib. XII 18.2 (τριμύριοι δὲ μισθοφόροι). The sources do not mention a name of their commander. PARKE, *Greek* (n. 17), 183 is skeptical toward this figure. Arrian's last mention of Thymondas (*An.* II 13.2) demonstrates that Thymondas was not a single leader of all Greeks in the Persian service since they were under leadership of four commanders. Curtius' statement (III 9.2) *Thymodes erat, Graecis peditibus mercede conductis, triginta milibus, praepositus* is not credible. It is rather more probable that Thymondas who in 333 BC was quite young and not experienced in the military matters before the battle of Issus, commanded only mercenaries whom he had received earlier from Pharnabazus son of Artabazus after the death of Memnon of Rhodes.

19 Arrian (*An.* III 16.2) assumes that when Darius fled from battlefield of Gaugamela to Media he was joined by 2,000 τῶν μισθοφόρων ξένων under leadership of Patron the Phocian and Glaucus the Aetolian. Of course, they were the same Greek mercenaries who later surrendered to Alexander in Hyrcania, 1,500 in number (Arr. *An.* III 23.7-9; D.S. XVII 76.2; Curt. VI 5.1-10). It is unknown whether Thymondas was among these soldiers who, according to Curtius (V 11.1-12), were led by Patron. On the role of

Gaugamela, he could have saved the Athenians who were captured by Alexander and to lead them back to Athens. As it is obvious the decree refers to envoys who are mentioned as $\pi\rho\sigma\beta\epsilon\iota$ in the line 14 of the inscription. There are at least three possibilities. Firstly, the inscription may mention Thymondas' role related to Athenian embassies to Darius III. Secondly, it could refer to the exchange of ambassadors between Thymondas and Athens. Thirdly, it can mention the Athenian ambassadors to Alexander. The first hypothesis is most probable. To solve the problem one needs to consider (a) the time and circumstances of the surrender of Greek mercenaries to Alexander after the battle of Gaugamela and (b) the treatment by Alexander of Greek envoys to Darius when he took them.

According to Arrian (*An.* III 23.7-9), in Hyrcania Artabazus came to Alexander with three of his sons, Cophen, Ariobarzanes, and Arsames, accompanied by envoys from the Greek mercenaries in the service of Darius. Alexander offered Artabazus and his sons in a position of honour at his court, both on account of their fidelity to Darius and because they were among the leading nobles of Persia. To the envoys from the Greeks, begging him to make a truce with them on behalf of the whole mercenary force, Alexander replied that he would not make any agreement with them, because they were acting with great guilt in serving as soldiers on the side of the barbarians against Greece, in contravention of the resolution of the Greeks. He commanded them to come and surrender, leaving it to him to treat them as he pleased. The envoys said that they yielded both themselves and their comrades to Alexander, and urged him to send someone with them to act as their leader, so that they might be conducted to him in safety. They said they were 1,500 in number. Accordingly Alexander sent Andronicus, son of Agerrius, and Artabazus to them. So, Arrian's report certainly suggests that Artabazus' family was among Greek mercenaries and Artabazus himself was later among those appointed by Alexander to arrange the surrender of the mercenaries.²⁰ Diodorus (XVII 76.2) briefly confirms this testimony and Curtius (VI 5.1-10) reports this episode in detail. According to him, Alexander had entered Hyrcania, when Artabazus met him with Darius's relatives, his own children, and Greek soldiers. The King immediately offered him his right hand, for Artabazus had been guest of Philip, when, under Artaxerxes III Ochus, he had been to flee his country. Artabazus, by now was ninety-five year old, was accompanied by his nine sons which he had all of one woman. Curtius (VI 5.6-10) says that there were 1,500 soldiers, led by Artabazus, besides envoys from various states to Darius (*legati ad Dareum*). The soldiers joined Alexander's army; the rest were sent home, except the Lacedaemonians, who were committed to custody. Thymondas as Artabazus' relative could be among these mercenaries though not as their leader.²¹

Patron and his mercenaries in the situation related to the arrest of Darius by Bessus see J. RZEPKA, "Conspirators – Companions – Bodyguards: A Note on the So-Called Mercenary Source and the Conspiracy of Bessus (Curt.V.8.1-11)", *AHB* 23 (2009/2011), 19–31.

20 J.E. ATKINSON, *A Commentary on Q. Curtius Rufus' Historiae Alexandri Magni Books 5 to 7.2*, Amsterdam 1994, 193 suggests that Artabazus' role in these negotiations is explicable by the fact that he had ties by marriage with the family of Memnon and Mentor.

21 One cannot be sure if Pharnabazus son of Artabazus who succeeded Memnon in the military command, was present among his relatives and the Greek mercenaries in the battle of Gaugamela as well as in Hyrcania. Arrian (*An.* III 2.7) states that he was taken in Chios as war prisoner by Hegelochus and then escaped from Cos. A.B. BOSWORTH, *A Historical Commentary on Arrian's History of Alexander*, I, Oxford 1980, 351 assumes, that Pharnabazus was not been among sons of Artabazus in Hyrcania.

As for Greek embassies to Darius, our the sources attest that Alexander captured them in Asia on two occasions. Arrian (*An.* II 15.2) tells us that after the battle of Issus in 333 BC Alexander took the Persian camp at Damascus where he captured some Greek envoys, who had recently arrived to King Darius III – πρόσβεις τῶν Ἑλλήνων οἱ πρὸς Δαρεῖον (Spartan Euthycles, Thebans Thessaliscus son of Ismenias and Dionysodorus, Athenian Iphicrates son of Iphicrates). It seems that Arrian speaks of a joint diplomatic action of the Greeks to the Persian King. Further, it is quite certain that the Theban delegates were exiles who after the destruction of Thebes by Alexander in 335 BC apparently resided in Athens (so they had come to the camp of Darius on behalf of the Thebans as a part of the Athenian delegation). And finally, some Greek envoys belonged to families who maintained hereditary ties with the Persians.²² According to Arrian (*An.* II 15.3-5) Alexander treated them differentially. He released the Thebans deploring the destruction of their city, but he continued to hold the Athenians and Spartans as the captives. Curtius (III 13.15) reports that after the battle of Issus Alexander captured Greek envoys in the camp of Darius, including the Athenians Aristogiton, Dropides and Iphicrates and Spartans Pausippus, Onomastorides, Monimus and Callicratides. Meanwhile, in this case, there is a confusion in Curtius' account of the embassy sent by the Greeks to the Persians in 333 BC with the later one.²³ Arrian (*An.* III 24.4) also indicates that in 330 BC, after the battle of Gaugamela and the death of Darius, Alexander captured in Hyrcania another "joint" Greek embassy to the Great King, which included the Spartans Callistratidas, Pausippus, Monimus, Onomas and Athenian Dropides, as well as Greek mercenaries. Arrian (*An.* III 24.5) stresses that Alexander released those Greeks who became the Persian mercenaries before the formation of the Corinthian League. If Thymondas was among these Greeks he could be also pardoned. Moreover he could act as an intermediary in the negotiations with Alexander and could contribute to the release not only of the Athenian mercenaries, but also envoys who had been captured in Damascus and in Hyrcania.

The rescue of the Athenians (mercenaries and/or envoys to Darius) possibly was the most suitable reason for honours which the Athenian people have granted to Thymondas. If this interpretation is tenable, the decree was not be a reflection of the Athenian attitude toward Alexander, but it records the gratitude of the Athenian people for services rendered by Thymondas and his family. In this respect, Memnon the Younger could be considered as a scholarly misconception. This man never existed. Of course, my proposition is hypothetic in a number of points since it is unknown if Thymondas (a) fought at Gaugamela, (b) was among those Greeks who retreated from the battlefield and surrendered to Alexander in Hyrcania, (c) took part in the negotiations with Alexander concerning the fate of Greek mercenaries and the envoys. But we can call into attention (a) silence of the sources about Thymondas' moves after his flight to Egypt, (b) the association of Artabazus and his family

22 Spartan Euthycles could be the son or grandson of Euthycles who was ambassador to Susa in 368/7 BC (X. *HG.* VII 1.33). Thessaliscus was son of Ismenias who had arrived to Susa as Theban envoy in 368/7 BC (Plu. *Art.* 22; Ael. *VH* I.21) and grandson of Ismenias collaborated with the Persians in the Corinthian war (X. *HG* V 2.36). In the case of the Athenian envoy Iphicrates, there were also hereditary connections with the Persians since his father Iphicrates served under Pharnabazus in Egypt in 373 BC (D.S. XV 29.3-4).

23 On detailed analysis of the sources' data on the Greek envoys to Darius III see: BOSWORTH, *Historical* (n. 21), 233–234.

with the Greek soldiers, (c) association of these soldiers with the Greek embassy to Darius, (d) participation of Artabazus in negotiations with the Greeks and (i) the amnesty for some mercenaries as well as envoys afforded by Alexander. All these observations may lead us to the conclusion that Thymondas may have been military active at least until 330/329 BC. This course of events, from my viewpoint, explains more plausibly the reason why the Athenians granted honours to Thymondas in 327/6 BC.

The Methods of Divination Used in the Campaigns of the Assyrian Kings and Alexander the Great

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Times of war are connected with many obligations from very different areas of life. The people involved have to organize intended objectives and consequences of the action, strategy, ideology, call-up, provisioning, etc. All of this is more or less predictable; however, during a war irrational factors cannot be ignored. Human behavior in extreme situations, where one has to take into account the loss of life, always involves some element of unpredictability. The ancients minimized this danger by consulting on all aspects of war with the divine powers that know the future. For them this was nothing irrational, it was rather one of the most important factors that influenced the course and result of war. Aspects such as supernatural rituals and divination are an integral part of war. Magical technologies and rituals can be described as the semiotics of war that delineate the parameters for the correct and incorrect conduct thereof.¹

Xenophon's general observation may be taken to apply to the whole of archaic and classical Greek culture: "In a war enemies plot against one another but seldom know whether these plots are well laid. It is impossible to find any other advisers in such matters except the gods. They know everything, and they give signs in advance to whomever they wish through sacrifices, birds of omen, voices, and dreams. And it is likely that they are more ready to give advice to those who not only ask what they should do when they happen to be in need, but even in good fortune attend to the gods in whatever way they are able."²

"In the Greek world the Spartans were experts (*technitai*) of warfare".³ Burkert says of the ritualization⁴ of Greek warfare: "war may almost appear like one great sacrificial action".⁵ Many of the elements of warfare are correlatives of those in ritual sacrifice among the Greeks: the sequence of procession, violent blows, the spilling of blood, the burning of flesh and pouring of libations, which stand at the centre of the sacrificial ritual, are paralleled in the progression of a battle.⁶

1 Z. BAHRANI, *Rituals of War: The Body and Violence in Mesopotamia*, New York 2008, 16.

2 X. *Eq.* 9.8–9.

3 X. *Lac.* 13.5.

4 His books about the similarity between myth and ritual, see: W. BURKERT, *Savage Energies: Lessons of Myth and Ritual in Ancient Greece*, Chicago 2001; W. BURKERT, *Home Necans. Interpretationen altgriechischer Opferriten und Mythen*, Berlin/New York 1997; W. BURKERT, *Structure and History in Greek Mythology and Ritual*, Berkeley/Los Angeles/London 1979.

5 W. BURKERT, *Greek Religion: Archaic and Classical*, Oxford 2007, 267.

6 BURKERT, *Greek* (n. 5), 266–7.

Divination

There is overwhelming evidence that portents played an important role in all areas of life in the ancient world.⁷ Divination⁸ is a salient characteristic of Mesopotamian civilization.⁹ Divination is especially necessary in times of crisis or ‘turning points’ at which it is imperative to make correct choices. Such responsibility carried great risk if mistakes were made. It was not only the responsibility of the seer to choose the correct interpretation amidst a range of possibilities; it was also essential to first recognize the sign as a sign.¹⁰ Divination interpreted the signs of divinity and guaranteed unfailing accuracy. The Mesopotamians believed that the gods wrote in the fabric of the universe, and that is why the world could be read by those who were wise enough. This conviction is based on the idea that to some extent the future is pre-determined; but that the gods, especially Shamash and Adad, have made available to man certain indications of the future (omens and portents) in the world, which can be interpreted (divined) by experts with specialist knowledge. The future as crystallized in the present was not considered by the Babylonians to be created solely by the gods but rather as the result of a dialogue between man and god.¹¹

The seriousness with which divination was treated during war is presented in the *Legend of Naram-Sin (Naram-Sin and the Enemy Hordes)*.¹² Naram-Sin (2254–2218), does not comply with the divine words heard during extispicy and this act of disobedience gave rise to a series of military defeats that were detrimental to the entire kingdom.¹³ In this legend the ritual of divination before military campaigns is described:

“He [Enmerker] summoned the diviners and instructed (them).
They “touched” the lambs, [seven for seven].
[He set up] the holy reed altars.
[The diviners] spoke thus.”¹⁴

Shulgi boasts of using extispicy to determine not only cultic matters, but also military actions.¹⁵ In the OB letter to Zimri-Lim, the god Adad (Addu) is quoted as admonishing the king thus:

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- 7 Cic. *Div.*; see W.K. PRITCHETT, *The Greek State at War*, Berkeley/Los Angeles/London 1979, III, 142.
8 See J. BLACK and A. GREEN, *Gods, Demons and Symbols of Ancient Mesopotamia: an Illustrated Dictionary*, London 2004, 68–9. On the complex subject of Mesopotamian divination, a proper place to start is: A.L. OPPENHEIM, *Ancient Mesopotamia: Portrait of a Dead Civilization*, Chicago 1977, 206–27. Less detailed introductory discussions are J. BOTTÉRO, *Mesopotamia: Writing Reasoning, and the Gods*, Chicago/London 1995, 125–37; J. BOTTÉRO, *Religion in Ancient Mesopotamia*, Chicago/London 2001, 170–202; M. FLOWER, *The Seer in Ancient Greece*, Berkeley/Los Angeles/London 2008, 104–31.
9 P. MICHAŁOWSKI, “How to Read the Liver – in Sumerian”, in: A.K. Guinan et al. (eds.), *If a Man Builds a Joyful House: Assyriological Studies in Honor of Erle Verdun Leichty*, Leiden/Boston 2006, 247.
10 S.I. JOHNSTON, *Ancient Greek Divination*, Oxford, 2008, 117.
11 S.M. MAUL, “Divination Culture and the Handling of the Future”, in: G. Leick (ed.), *The Babylonian World*, New York/London 2008, 362.
12 *Naram-Sin and the Enemy Hordes*, in: J.G. WESTENHOLZ, *Legends of the Kings of Akkade*, Winona Lake 1997, 263–368.
13 Alexander the Great behaves similarly, although victorious in battle, but after the battle falls heavily from health, see Arr. *An.* IV 4.
14 *Naram-Sin and the Enemy Hordes*, 14–17, and 72–75, in: WESTENHOLZ, *Legends* (n. 12): 305 and 317.

“This is what I (Adad lord of Aleppo)
 d[esire] from you.
 When you go out on campaign.
 Do not go without an oracle (*tērtu*),
 You will go out on a campaign.
 If I do not
 You will [not] g[o] out the gate”.¹⁶

Cicero was entirely convinced that the use of divination was universal amongst all the humans.¹⁷ Divination in his opinion is irreplaceable because it deals with crisis and conflict and does so with a high degree of rationality:

“Now I am aware of no people, however refined and learned or however savage and ignorant, which does not think signs are given of future events, and that certain persons can recognize those signs and foretell events before they occur. First of all – to seek authority from the most distant sources – the Assyrians, on account of the vast plains inhabited by them, and because of the open and unobstructed view of the heavens presented to them on every side, took observations of the paths and movements of the stars, and, having made note of them transmitted to posterity what significance they had for each person. And in the same nation the Chaldeans – a name which they derived not from their art but their race – have, it is thought, by means of long-continued observation of the constellations, perfected a science which enables them to foretell what any man’s lot will be and for what fate he was born”.¹⁸

It might be supposed that the situation was quite different in the case of the rational Greeks, however divination was also central to the Greek religion.¹⁹ In the case of Greek civilization it was the awareness of the gods’ presence that motivated the army. The Greeks were totally helpless when making decisions without consulting the gods. This results not from lack of ideas or creativity, but from the fact that such behavior would be ungodly and would be a sign of misuse of divine prerogatives (*hubris*). The religious obligations of the times often prevailed over purely military considerations and a final decision was often made by seers.²⁰

15 *Hymn Shulgi B*, ll. 136–8, see MICHALOWSKI, “How to Read” (n. 9), 247–248.

16 2.A.15= AEM 1/1, 233, 11’–7’, Chapter XIV: “The Other One Translation: The Mari Prophetic Texts in Transliteration and English Translation”, in: J.J.M. ROBERTS, *The Bible and the Ancient Near East: Collected Essays*, Winona Lake 2002, 169. The version of the translation of two last lines could be: “If I am present in [your] (or:[my]) oracle you shall go on the campaign, otherwise, do not go outside the gate”, see J.-M. DURAND, “La mythologie du combat entre le dieu de l’orage et la mer en Mésopotamie”, in: J.-M. Durand and J. Marguerton (eds.), *Mari Annales de Recherche Interdisciplinaires*, VII, Paris 1993, 44.

17 Cic. *Div.* I 1.1.

18 Cic. *Div.* I 1.2.

19 W. BURKERT, “Divination, III”, in: *Thesaurus Cultus et Rituum Antiquorum (ThesCRA)*, Los Angeles 2005, 1–51; D. LATEINER, “Oracles, Religion, and Politics in Herodotus”, in: R.B. Strassler (ed.), *The Landmark Herodotus: The Histories*, New York 2007, 810.

20 W.K. PRITCHETT, *Ancient Greek Military Practices*, Berkeley/Los Angeles/London 1971, 126.

This kind of attitude did not differ substantially from the case of Esarhaddon, who, before his expedition, asks Ashur through the oracle about quite literally everything:

“If they go and set up camp before the city Amul, will they, be it by means of war, or by force, or through tunnels and breaches, or by means of ramps, or by means of battering rams, or through friendliness or peaceful negotiations, or through insurrection and rebellion, or through any other ruse of capturing a city, capture the city, Amul?”²¹

The diviners. *Bārû*

Scholars were an important part of the NA royal court. The five disciplines of Assyrian wisdom (*nēmequ*), based on religious and metaphysical concepts, are represented by a chief scholar, the *ummānu*²², and his assistants: the *āšipūtu*²³ or ‘exorcistic lore,’ the *āsūtu* or ‘medicine, therapy,’ the *bārūtu* or ‘divination, extispicy,’ the *kalūtu* or ‘science of lamentations,’ and *tupšarrūtu* or ‘science of the scribes,’ that is, astrology.²⁴ There is a list of scholars who accompanied Esarhaddon during his second invasion of Egypt. The list starts with seven astrologers (*tupšar EAE*, literary ‘scribe of the canonical omen series *Enūma Anu Enlil*’; often abbreviated to ‘scribe’ *tupšarru*), followed by nine exorcists (*āšipu*), then five diviners (*bārū*), nine physicians (*asū*) and six lamenters (*kalū*). So far, this is the expected range of experts representing the five main branches of Mesopotamian scholarship.²⁵ This

²¹ *SAA4*, no. 63.

²² The human sages, *ummānu*, appear for the first time in the NA king lists. The ‘wise monsters’ *apkallu* are for the first time listed by name and correlated with legendary and historical kings. While Mesopotamian kings remain on the throne, the *apkallu* remain confined to myth and ritual. In the Seleucid period, after the loss of native kingship, the *apkallu* enter anew in history. Evidence of a historically developing identification between the Mesopotamian ritual practitioner and the *apkallu* in general and Adapa in particular finally emerges in Seleucid Uruk, see S.L. SANDERS, *Writing, Ritual, and Apocalypse: Studies in the Theme of Ascent to Heaven in Ancient Mesopotamia and Second Temple in Judaism*, Ph. D. thesis, Johns Hopkins University 1999, 144–145.

²³ *Āšipu/mašmaššu* is connected with white magic and with god Ea and Asalluhi (one of the name of Marduk), see M. HUTTER, *Religionen in der Umwelt des Alten Testaments*, I: *Babylonier, Syrer, Perser*, Stuttgart 1996, 90. The *āšipu* was the magic-expert who countered disease by charms and incantations, by magical means. The *asū*, by contrast, was the physician who healed the sick with bandages, by his medical craft, which was rational. In the healing process also *bārū* take part, see N.P. HEEBEL, “The Babylonian Physician Rabā-ša-Marduk: Another Look at Physicians and Exorcists in the Ancient Near East”, in: A. Attia and G. Buisson (eds.) *Advances in Mesopotamian Medicine, from Hammurabi to Hippocrates: Proceedings of the International Conference “Oeil malade et mauvais oeil,” Collège de France, Paris, 23rd June 2006*, Leiden/Boston 2009, 13. The difference between *asū* and *āšipu*, see J. SCURLOCK, “Ancient Mesopotamian Medicine”, in: D.C. Snelli (ed.), *A Companion to the Ancient Near East*, Oxford 2007, 327–9. The *āšipu* as a physician, see J. SCURLOCK, *Magico-Medical Means of Treating Ghost-Induced Illnesses in Ancient Mesopotamia*, Leiden 2006, 75. “Der *āšipu* ist der Beschwörung und Sühnenpriest, der, im Dienste Ea (Ae)’s und Marduk stehend, durch das Mittel der Beschwörung (*šiptu*) Krankheiten zu heilen, Süden zu sühnen, von Bann zu lösen, böse Dämonen zu vertreiben, die zürnende Gottheit gnädig zu stimmen berufen ist”. See H. ZIMMERN, *Beiträge zur Kenntnis der babylonischen Religion*, Leipzig 1901, 91.

²⁴ N. VELDHUIS, “Divination: Theory and Use”, in: Guinan et al., *If a man* (n. 8), 78.

²⁵ K. RADNER, “The Assyrian King and his Scholars: The Syro-Anatolian and the Egyptian Schools”, in: M. Luukko, S. Svård and R. Mattila (eds.), *Of God(s), Trees, Kings, and Scholars: Neo-Assyrian and Related Studies in Honour of Simo Parpola*, Helsinki 2009, 222.

is followed by another three groups of advisers, three ‘bird watchers’ (*dāgil issūri*), three so-called *hartibē*²⁶ and three ‘Egyptians scribes’ (*tupšarru Musurāyu*). The bird watchers operating in Assyria are frequently identified as originating from Anatolia and Northern Syria.²⁷ After victory over Egypt, Esarhaddon deported many inhabitants, not only the members of royal family of Taharqa but, what is important for this article, diviners, physicians, dream interpreters and snake-charmers.²⁸

In Akkadian, *pašāru* means a multilayered reading or decipherment of texts. *Pašāru* as a form of textual exegesis was closely linked to divination (*bārūtu*) which was, in turn, related to vision as an act of seeing. A *bārū* was a type of priest who was also a diviner, the noun *bārū*, which is derived from the verb to ‘see’, literally means observer or seer. The *bārū* then was an expert in *bārūtu*, the observation of signs in the world.²⁹ The diviners in Mesopotamia viewed themselves as integral links in a chain of transmission going back to the gods. A privileged place for the occurrence of such signs was the entrails and livers of sacrificial animals, for it was believed that the gods placed such signs there. This knowledge about the will of the gods was believed to be gained by consulting a diviner (*bārū(m)*).

As early as in the OB period, a diviner accompanied the kings into battle. In Mari archive records explanations were preserved of how *haruspex* used extispicy to confirm prophecies and dreams and even predict lunar eclipses.³⁰ There is an example of a military expedition marching out from Babylon under the leadership of *bārūm*-priests or diviners:

“Ilušu-nasir, the *bārūm*-priest, a servant of my lord “leads” the forces of my lord
A Babylonian *bārūm*-priest goes
With the Babylonian forces
These 600 troops are (now)
In Šabazim. The *bārūm*-priests are gathering
Omens. When an omen appears favorable
150 soldiers
Go out and 150 return.”³¹

Presumably diviners accompanied the army in all its operations.³² In a relief depicting martial scenes from the king’s campaigns, a priest in a military camp is shown leaning over the altar, in the process of examining the entrails. In a detail within Sennacherib’s relief series

26 A term used for the *Egyptian* ritual experts.

27 RADNER, *Assyrian* (n. 25), 223. There is also the opinion of P. HÖGEMANN and N. OETTINGER, “Die Seuche im Heerlager der Achäer vor Troia. Orakel und magische Rituale im hethiterzeitlichen Kleinasien und im archaischen Griechenland,” *Klio* 90 (2008), 17. The opposite opinion about the Mesopotamian origins of bird divination, see D.E. SMITH, “Portentous Birds Flying West: On the Mesopotamian Origin of Homeric Bird-Divination,” *JANER* 13 (2013), 67–80.

28 I. EPH’AL, “Esarhaddon, Egypt, and Shubria: Politics and Propaganda,” *JCS* 57 (2005), 100.

29 BAHRANI, *Rituals* (n. 1), 63–4.

30 J.-M. DURAND, *Archives épistolaires de Mari*, I.1, Paris 1988, 3–80.

31 ARMT II, 22.23–3, see S.-M. KANG, *Divine War in the Old Testament and in the Ancient Near East*, Berlin/New York 1989, 42. In the OB period, there are references to the diviner as “the one who walks in front of the army.” See CAD B: 124; U. JEYES, *Old Babylonian Extispicy: Omen Texts in the British Museum*, Istanbul 1989, 22–3; FLOWER, *Seer* (n. 8), 96; BAHRANI, *Rituals* (n. 1), 188.

32 S. DALLEY, “Ancient Mesopotamian Military Organization”, in: J.M. Sasson (ed.), *Civilizations of the Ancient Near East*, I, New York 2006, 421.

of the battle of Lachish³³, priests before an altar appear within the military camp. Similar scenes of priests at camp appear in battle reliefs from the reign of Sargon II in the eighth campaign.³⁴ In most of these scenes, priests stand in front of an altar, a high, table-like object with animal legs carved as its support. The priests wear tall headgear. A rounded dinos-like vessel is in some cases set in front of them on a stand. These oracular consultations are requests for signs of sanction from the gods at the moment of battle and they were a necessary step in justifying war and ensuring victory through the approval of the war by the divine.³⁵ On the reliefs from Assurnassirpal II's palace in Nimrud, in the ninth century BC, one can see priests performing extispicy in a military camp.³⁶ They used the catalogued battle omens and strategic queries, helped to decide about military strategy.³⁷ There are only a few pieces of correspondence between Esarhaddon and Ashurbanipal with *bārû*. There is no doubt that records were kept and the condition of a liver was compared to previous instances of omens identified when certain events had taken place. Even when astronomical omens became most prevalent in the courts of the Assyrian kings in the 1st millennium BC, these omens were submitted to *bārû* priests for confirmation through extispicy.³⁸ Prophecies by ecstasies also had to be submitted to hepatoscopy in order to be validated.³⁹ For this process to take place a hair from the ecstatic's head and a clipping from the fringe of his garment were sent to represent him in the ritual.⁴⁰

Extispicy

Extispicy clearly dominated other forms of manticism in Mesopotamian divination. The divinatory liver is divided into the parts responsible for interpreting specific signs.⁴¹ "The 'Hole' was associated with death, the 'Weapon' with warfare, the 'Foot' with the approaching enemy",⁴² the role of the 'Weapon' (*kakku*, (giš.tukul)⁴³ and 'Path' (*padānu*) was especially connected with war, battles, power and armed forces.⁴⁴ The 'Strength' (*danānu*) deals with secrets but also with military strength and impregnability.⁴⁵ Here are some examples:

33 Conquest of the city is reported not only in the Assyrian palace's reliefs but also in the biblical sources (II Kings 18.17, 19.8; II Chron. 32.9).

34 See W. MAYER, *Assyrien und Urartu*, I: *Der Achte Feldzug Sargons II in Jahr 714 v. Chr.*, Münster 2013.

35 SAA4, XXX-I.

36 SAA4, XXV-VI, figs, 2-3.

37 D. LAUNDERVILLE, *Piety and Politics: The Dynamics of Royal Authority in Homeric Greece, Biblical Israel, and Old Mesopotamia*, Grand Rapids/Cambridge 2003, 214, 216; E. REINER, *Astral Magic in Babylonia*, Philadelphia 1995, 64; BAHRANI, *Rituals* (n. 1), 188-191, figs. 7.1-2.

38 SAA4, XXXII; I. STARR, *Rituals of the Diviner*, Malibu 1983, 5.

39 SAA9.

40 BAHRANI, *Rituals* (n. 1), 81.

41 U. KOCH-WESTENHOLZ, *Babylonian Liver Omens: The Chapters Manzāzu, Padānu and Pān Tākalti of the Babylonian Extispicy Series Mainly From Aššurbanipal's Library*, Copenhagen 2000, 45.

42 U. JEYES, "The Act of Extispicy in Ancient Mesopotamia: An Outline", in: B. Alster (ed.), *Assyriological Miscellanies*, I, Copenhagen 1980, 25.

43 KOCH-WESTENHOLZ, *Babylonian* (n. 41), 48-51.

44 HUTTER, *Religionen* (n. 23), 100.

45 KOCH-WESTENHOLZ, *Babylonian* (n. 41), 46-7.

§16) “If a weapon-mark is situated at the right-hand jamb of the “palace gate” and [points] toward the left-hand jamb: [those sallying from] my [city]-gate will defeat the enemy.”⁴⁶

Manzāzu Commentary 1:⁴⁷

A iv 7, 8, 9 C iii 27, 28, 29 100) “If the Presence has disappeared and a Weapon is placed in its normal place and it points to the Thin Part of the Yoke: The armed forces of the prince will prevail over the forces of his enemy.”

A iv 32, C iv 10 116) “If a Weapon lies cross wise in the middle of the Presence: My army will divide the spoils.”

Chapter 4 of the Babylonian extispicy series *bārûtu*, *Padānu*, ‘the Path’.

Padānu Tablet 3:⁴⁸

A 1’, B 2, C 2 2) “If there are two Paths and they lie side by side: My army will abandon its campaign and embark on another.”

A 2’, B 3, C 3 3) “If there are two Paths and the second one is bent and points to the normal one: Weapons that were not brought inside will attack the prince.”

Padānu Tablet 6:⁴⁹

2’-3’ [-----] “there is a Weapon-mark of the right and a Weapon of the left [---: Do not wav]er [towards your enemy, do battle! Even though he may have conquered your auxiliaries, he will [leave you alone].”

4’-5’ “If there are two Paths... a Hole is placed between them: Your campaign will change and your auxiliary.”

Pān tākalti Tablet 4:⁵⁰

A 1 1) “If the Strength is split: My troops will be dispersed.”

A 2 2) “If the Strength is bent: Rise of the evil demon, in battle my army will change its position, the gods will withdraw from my army.”

A 6 5) “If the Strength is turned and its head is split: Your enemy will not reach their goal, concerning your enemy: you will have a helper.”

A 7 6) “If the Strength is turned and its base is split: My army will capture the leader of the enemy army.”

46 “Omens from Liver: bāb ekalli and šulmu”, in: A.R. GEORGE, *Babylonian Divinatory Texts Chiefly in the Schøyen Collection: with an Appendix of Material from the Papers of W.G. Lambert*, Bethesda 2013, no. 24, 160.

47 KOCH-WESTENHOLZ, *Babylonian* (n. 41), 146.

48 KOCH-WESTENHOLZ, *Babylonian* (n. 41), 187.

49 KOCH-WESTENHOLZ, *Babylonian* (n. 41), 209.

50 KOCH-WESTENHOLZ, *Babylonian* (n. 41), 316.

A 8 7) “If the Strength is perforated: He who lives in your garrison city will be made to submit to the enemy.”

Pān tākalti Commentary 7:⁵¹

A 5', B 3' 4) “[If the Str]ength is turned and its base is split: My army will capture the leader of the enemy army.”

A 6', B 4', 5' 5) “If the Strength is bent and its rear end is split: Your secret will go out to the enemy.”

A 8', B 7' 7) “If 2) the head of the Strength is erased: The gods [will desert] my army.”

A 9', B 8' 8) “If 3) the base of the Strength is erased: Witchcraft will seize my army.”

§ 3', 12'-15' “If the gall-bladder's inside is full of blood: mistakes by the diviner, downfall of the army.”⁵²

The last excerpt presents both the importance of extispicy and responsibility of the diviner.

The custom of investigating the liver was quite typical not only for the Babylonians; one finds evidence of it even in the *Bible*.⁵³ Mesopotamian hepatoscopy diffused, models of livers have been found in Alalakh, Tell el Hajj in Asia Minor, Ugarit in Syria, Hazor and Megiddo in Palestine, and on Cyprus. An Assyrian hepatoscopy was practiced at Tarsos in Cilicia.⁵⁴ According to Burkert, the correspondence between Etruscan and Assyrian hepatoscopy is evident.⁵⁵

Greek iconography shows the seers examining the liver from about 530 BC.⁵⁶ Depictions of a warrior examining entrails appear on nineteen black-figure and on three red-figure Attic vases dating from the last quarter of the sixth century and the first quarter of the fifth century BC (that is, from c. 525 to 475 BC).⁵⁷

In the Greek military context, the organs used for divination in the sacrifices termed τὰ ἱερά are designated as either the liver or σπλάγχνα (*sphagia*).⁵⁸ Hepatoscopy was very popular,⁵⁹ if the liver was not smooth and clean and light-colored, especially if it had not

51 KOCH-WESTENHOLZ, *Babylonian* (n. 41), 424.

52 “Omens from the Liver”: *Gall-Bladder and “Eye-Slit”*. MS 3295, no. 10, in: GEORGE, *Babylonian* (n. 46), 39.

53 Ez. 21. 26.

54 W. BURKERT, *The Orientalizing Revolution: Near Eastern Influence on Greek Culture in the Early Archaic Age*, Cambridge MA 1995, 48, n. 7.

55 BURKERT, *Orientalizing* (n. 54), 46.

56 BURKERT, *Orientalizing* (n. 54), 49.

57 F.T. STRATEN, *Hiera kala: Images of Animal Sacrifice in Archaic and Classical Greece*, Leiden 1995; BURKERT, *Divination* (n. 19), III: 1–3, fig. 27 a, b, c, 66 a.

58 In Plu. *Alex.* 73, *Arat.* 43; Arr. *An.* VII 18.4; Paus. VI 2.4 reference is expressly made to the liver (τὸ ἥπαρ). In Plb. VII 12 the used word is σπλάγχνα, but since in this passage the organ is portable, the liver may have been the sole part removed.

59 Calchas, see A.J. PFIFFIG, *Die etruskische Religion. Sakrale Stätten – Götter – Kulte – Rituale*, Wiesbaden 1998, fig. 46.

one lobe, it was an unfavorable omen.⁶⁰ Invisible patches in the liver sealed the fate of Hephaistion and Alexander.⁶¹ It is worth comparing this with the Babylonian prophecy: “If the entire liver is anomalous: omen of the king of Akkad regarding catastrophe”.⁶²

Mantis

The seer is the most obvious type of religious professional and warfare is certainly the most conspicuous context for divination.⁶³ Mantis practiced what the Greeks called a craft or skill (*mantikē tekhnē*)⁶⁴, and the aim of this craft was to ascertain the will and intentions of the gods in relation to human action. The term *mantis* is translated as soothsayer, diviner, or prophet; he was an expert in the art of divination.⁶⁵ Divinatory rituals were essential prior to combat. The most important role of the seer in the Greek society was arguably on the battlefield.⁶⁶ No general would leave camp or begin a battle without first consulting his seer.⁶⁷ Each plan of campaign was tested in advance by means of extispicy. Only with the *mantis*’ consent and the fulfillment of specified conditions were the troops moved into battle.⁶⁸ The *mantis* regarded himself as the official ascertaining the will and intention of the gods, quite apart from the exigencies of the tactical situation.⁶⁹

Alexander surrounded himself with *mantis*, at least four of whom (Aristandros, Demophon, Cleomantis and Peithagoras) we know by name, and with *magoi* and ‘Chaldean’ priests. A priestly journal of sacrifices with records of divination was kept during his expedition.⁷⁰ Confirmation, that historical military seers were capable of reporting more than just whether the *hiera* and *sphagia* were favorable or not, is found in the activities of the greatest seer of his day, Aristander of Telmessus, who served first Philip II and then Alexander the Great between c. 356 and 327 BC.⁷¹ Aristander accompanied Alexander to Asia in 334 BC and he is the outstanding example of a seer whose competence covered the in-

60 X. *HG* III 4.15, VII 7.7.

61 Plu. *Alex.* 73.4 records the omen being told to Alexander outside of Babylon by the *mantis* Pythagoras (vel Peithagoras) shortly before his death. See Arr. *An.* VII 18.4.

62 See JEYES, *Old* (n. 31), no. 2; A.K. GUINAN, “Divination”, in: W. Hallo and K.L. Younger, (eds.), *The Context of Scripture: Canonical Compositions from the Biblical World*, I, Leiden/New York/Cologne 1997, 423.

63 R. PARKER, *Polytheism and Society at Athens*, Oxford 2007, 118.

64 A. *Pr.* 484; S. *OT* 709; Hdt. II 49, II 83.

65 M.A. FLOWER, “The Iamidae: A Mantic Family and Public Image”, in: B. Dignas and K. Trampedach (eds.), *Practitioners of the Divine: Greek Priests and Religious Officials from Homer to Heliodorus*, Cambridge, MA/London 2008, 188.

66 Important studies of the seer in warfare are H. POPP, *Die Einwirkung von Vorzeichen, Opfern, und Festen auf die Kriegführung der Griechen im 5. und 4. Jahrhundert v. Chr.*, Diss., Erlangen 1957; R. LONIS, *Guerre et religion en Grèce à l’époque classique: recherches sur les rites, les dieux, l’idéologie de la victoire*, Paris 1979; R. PARKER, “Sacrifice and Battle”, in: H. van Wees (ed.), *War and Violence in Ancient Greece*, London 2000, 299–314; M.H. JAMESON, “Sacrifice before Battle”, in: V.D. Hanson (ed.), *Hoplites: The Classical Greek Battle Experience*, London/New York 1991, 197–228; FLOWER, *Seer* (n. 8).

67 FLOWER, *Seer* (n. 8), 240.

68 X. *HG* II 4.17–8.

69 PRITCHETT, *Greek* (n. 7), 78.

70 PRITCHETT, *Greek* (n. 7), 146–7.

71 FLOWER, *Seer* (n. 8), 93.

terpretation of entrails, bird signs, and dreams, as well as natural phenomena. He probably wrote a book on portents, and more certainly a book on the interpretation of dreams.⁷²

There are indications that other seers of Alexander were also very talented. In one of his epigrams Posidippus attests:

“A *mantis* lies beneath the crow, the Thracian hero
Strymon, supreme steward of bird-omens.
This is the title Alexander gave him with his seal, for three times he defeated
The Persians after consulting his crow.”⁷³

Queries

The Mari prophetic texts forecast the later NA divinatory texts. Not only the structure but also the content and main points are very similar. It is impossible to go on a campaign without an oracle, the assurance of the gods' presence, and conviction about ultimate victory. Despite the large difference in time, over hundreds of years, the king is accompanied by the same gods: Ishtar, Adad and Nergal. Even the sign of victory is the same, that is, the head of the defeated ruler.⁷⁴ The diviners are part of the military cortege, they participate and enable the dialogue between the gods and the king. Without the gods' agreement, it is impossible to begin or finish a war or to make a treaty.⁷⁵ These are examples of such texts found at Mari and Eshnunna⁷⁶ connected with military affairs and it may be justifiable to compare them to the NA evidence:

“Thus says Ishtar of Ninet:
[W]ith my strong weapons
I will stand by you.”⁷⁷
As soon as I heard the tablet of my lord,
I summoned the diviners, and
The question as follows
I asked them, saying,
[M]y lord made an urgent question
And [wro]te to me. What do you counsel?”⁷⁸

72 See Plin. *Nat. index* XVII 243, (for the dream book) Artem. I 31, IV 23, cf. FLOWER, *Seer* (n. 8), 52.

73 Posidipp. 35 AB, cf. J.N. BREMMER, *Greek Religion and Culture, the Bible and the Ancient Near East*, Leiden/Boston 2008, 138–9.

74 BAHRAANI, *Rituals* (n. 1), 23–9, figs. 1.1–4; A.C. PIEPKORN, *Historical Prism Inscriptions of Ashurbanipal*, I: *Editions E, B 1–5, D, K*, Chicago 1933, 72–5. In Greek civilization one notices also many examples of treating cruelty as a tool in the ideological battle, see D.S. XVII 46.4, Arr. *An.* VI 17.2, Curt. IV 4.17; see L.A. TRITLE, “Hector’s Body: Mutilation of the Dead in Ancient Greece and Vietnam”, in: E.L. Wheeler (ed.), *The Armies of Classical Greece*, Aldershot 2007, 339; J. DOCKER, *The Origins of Violence: Religion, History, Genocide*, London 2008, 39–92.

75 Prophecy and other forms of divination were used in foreign politics as well as in interior politics, see J. STÖCKL, *Mine is Bigger than Yours: Divination (Ethical) Demands and Diplomacy in the Ancient Near East*, paper during SBL (EABS) International Meeting 2010 Tartu.

76 ROBERTS, *Bible* (n. 16): 157–253; M. NISSINEN, *Prophets and Prophecy in the Ancient Near East*, Atlanta 2003, 13–95.

77 31.A.2666 = AEM 1/1, 193, 16–8, ROBERTS, *Bible* (n. 16), 217.

78 48. M.5704 = AEM 1/1, 225, 6–19, ROBERTS, *Bible* (n. 16), 241.

Oracles of Encouragement to Esarhaddon:

(i 4) “[Esarh]addon, king of the lands, fear [not]!”

(i 6) “What wind has risen against you, whose wing I have not broken? Your enemies will roll before your feet like ripe apples.”

(i 11) “I am the Great Lady; I am Ištar of Arbela, who cast your enemies before your feet. What words have I spoken to you that you could not rely upon?”

(i 18) “I am Ištar of Arbela. I will flay your enemies and give them to you.”

(i 20) “I am Ištar of Arbela. I will go before you and behind you.”

(i 24) “Fear not! You are paralyzed, but in the midst of woe I will rise and sit down (beside you).”

(i 30) “King of Assyria, have no fear! I will deliver up the enemy of the king of Assyria for slaughter. [I will] keep you safe and [make] you [great in] your Palace of Succession.”

(ii 2) “What [.....] I would not have heard you? [The enemies ...] in neck st[ocks], [the vassals] under tribu[te]; I defea[ted] your enemy in a single [encounter].”

(ii 27) “Do not trust in man. Lift up your eyes, look to me! I am Ištar of Arbela; I reconciled Aššur with you. When you were small, I took you to me. Do not fear; praise me!”⁷⁹

In the collection of oracles to Esarhaddon, mostly from the goddess Ishtar, it is the goddess who throws the king’s enemies at his feet, and she flays them. She promises: “I will finish off your enemies”.⁸⁰ The oracles emphasize the universality of Esarhaddon’s and the god’s coming dominion.⁸¹ The meaning of oracles given by Ishtar of Arbela and other gods is decisive for the military campaigns and political affairs.⁸²

79 *SAA9*, no. 1.

80 “Esarhaddon and Ishtar”, in: B.R. FOSTER, *From Distant Days: Myths, Tales, and Poetry of Ancient Mesopotamia*, Bethesda 1995, 218.

81 Alexander the Great claimed to be a son of Zeus or Ammon. In relation of Strabo: “Callisthenes adds, (after the exaggerating style of tragedy,) that when Apollo had deserted the oracle among the Branchidæ, on the temple being plundered by the Branchidæ (who espoused the party of the Persians in the time of Xerxes,) and the spring had failed, it then re-appeared (on the arrival of Alexander); that the ambassadors also of the Milesians carried back to Memphis numerous answers of the oracle respecting the descent of Alexander from Jupiter”, see Str. XVII 1.44. Alexander accepted to be the son of Zeus at Siwah, see Arr. *An.* IV 7.25. Alexander not only allowed himself to be called the son of Zeus Ammon. The good, however malicious example is the story with Anaxarchus, see Plu. *Alex.* 28.2, see other relations of D.S. XVII 108.3, Just. XII 11.6, Arr. *An.* VII 8.3. The oracles to NA kings are given not only by Ishtar but also by Ashur or Nabu: Ashur announces “I slaughtered your enemies and filled the river with their blood” and “as a fiery glow from the gate of heaven, to throw down fire and have it devour them (his enemies)”. *SAA9*, no. 3.3, Nabu, see J. ATKINSON, “Prophecy in K 1285? Re-evaluating the Divine Speech Episodes of Nabû”, in: P. Gordon and H.M. Barstad (eds.), *“Thus Speaks Ishtar of Arbela”: Prophecy in Israel, Assyria, and Egypt in the Neo-Assyrian Period*, Winona Lake 2013, 59–90.

82 See. F.M. FALES and G.B. LANFRANCHI, “The Impact of Oracular Material on the Political Utterances and Political Action in the Royal Inscription of the Sargonid Dynasty”, in: J.-G. Heintz (ed.), *Oracles et*

According to Stoneman, the Mesopotamians made divination into a guild practice, but the Greeks formalized the procedure of making the gods speak.⁸³ In Diodorus one can find a similar story of the proximity of the king and goddesses. When Alexander arrived at the temple of Athena at Ilium, he noticed that a statue of Ariobarzanes, a former satrap of Phrygia, was overturned and an oracle given by the seer explained that Alexander with his own hands would slay a general of the enemy in battle and that Athena would help him in his success.⁸⁴ Before the expedition against Persia, Alexander arrived at Delphi to consult Pythia (precisely said Apollo). Under peculiar circumstances, on one of the days inauspicious for enquiry, he got the answer: “You are invincible.”⁸⁵ Not only the seers accompanied the ‘divine’ Alexander all the time, but a woman from Syria ‘inspired by god’ was constantly by his side.⁸⁶

As was mentioned earlier, the course of battle was determined by the gods. Very detailed and specific questions about battle plans and strategies are posed by the NA kings.⁸⁷ The specific military decisions and strategies were thought to have been handed down as oracles from heaven. In a series of queries to Shamash, the kings determined the course to be taken in battle.⁸⁸ The most well-known queries are from the NA period, but we also know of some from the OB period (1900-1595) and the Kassite period (1475-1155). The earliest queries, known as *tamītu* texts, have a similar grammatical or semantic formula to the NA omens. The similarity indicates that the NA queries were based on a long tradition of oracular military strategies, going back to the beginning of the second millennium.⁸⁹ The queries are attested only to Shamash, but earlier from the OB times *tamītus* and *ikribus* to Shamash and Adad (or only to Shamash). The term *nēpešti bārūti* ‘extispicy’ is attested also in the *tamītus*.⁹⁰ A Babylonian *tamītu* text is a question addressed to the Babylonian gods Shamash and Adad as a duo.⁹¹ Lambert states that the queries to Shamash share much phraseology and general style with *tamītus*, including the use of the word *tamītu* for ‘oracle questions,’ they have one major difference: they are addressed to Shamash alone: “Shamash, great lord, whom I am asking, answer me with reliable ‘Yes!’.”⁹² The royal inscriptions of Sennacherib and Esarhaddon refer to the king’s taking advice from divination through Shamash and Adad, but the inscriptions of Ashurbanipal, despite their extent, allude to such divination less frequently, and the present writer has noted one such mention

Prophéties dans l'Antiquité. Actes de Colloque de Strasbourg 15–17 juin 1995, Paris 1997, 99–114.

83 R. STONEMAN, *The Ancient Oracles: Making the Gods Speak*. New Haven 2011, 112.

84 D.S. XVII 17.6.

85 Plu. *Alex.* 14.6–7; D.S. XVII 93.4.

86 Arr. *An.* IV 13.

87 BAHRANI, *Rituals* (n. 1), 185–6.

88 The extispicy queries were among the earliest material published: J.A. KNUDTZON, *Assyrische Gebete an den Sonnengott für Staat und königliches Haus aus der Zeit Asarhaddons und Asurbanipals*, Leipzig 1893; ZIMMERN, *Beiträge* (n. 23); E.G. KLAUBER (ed.), *Politisch-religiöse Texte aus der Sargonidenzeit*, Leipzig 1913.

89 BAHRANI, *Rituals* (n. 1), 183.

90 SAA4, XXIX.

91 W.G. LAMBERT, *Babylonian Oracle Questions*, Winona Lake 2007, VII; 1.

92 LAMBERT, *Babylonian* (n. 91), 8.

of Shamash and Adad and one of Shamash alone, but followed by mention of Sin with the same function.⁹³

The Babylonian oracle questions (*i.e. tamītu*) and *ikribu* concern a course of action to which the supplicant wants the gods to give their stamp of approval (*e.g.*, a military action).⁹⁴ The question comprises the majority of the text. It may be divided into three parts, the last two of which are marked by a re-introduction of the person for whom the diviner is inquiring. The first part describes the potential preparations and attack of an enemy army. The second describes what the enemy may potentially harm among that which the concerned person is guarding. And the third part describes how the person for whom the diviner is inquiring might be affected by the enemy's potential actions.⁹⁵

Several *tamītus* offer questions from kings about campaigns or other matters of historical interest.⁹⁶

No. 1 *A campaign of Hammurabi of Babylon*:

“Shamash, lord of the judgment, Adad, lord of the inspection,
Concerning the soldiers of the palace, the soldiers of the palace gate, the chariot soldiers,
The foot soldiers, the elite soldiers, the desert soldiers,
The grouped soldiers, the Sutan and country soldiers,
Soldiers that Marduk rules over,
As many as Hammurabi, king of Babylon,
Calls together, organize and disbands: –
Should he select and choose chariots and infantry,
Should Adanshu-likshud, son of Sin-nahrani,
Who supervises the infantry,
Take control and lead them from the base camp?
Should he take the eastern route
Along the bank of the Tigris,
And go to Kasalluhhu?
Will they then, by the might of his victory, by... speaking,
By every kind of skilled operation
And all available kinds of battle equipment,
Take that city Kasalluhu?
Will they then safely return with a share of the abundant profit
And spoil of the city?
And will they send back news of success to the owner of his woolen
Fringe, that the seer may see, and the hearer may hear?
Your divinity, Shamash and Adad, etc.”

93 LAMBERT, *Babylonian* (n. 91), 9.

94 *Tamītus*, see. A. LENZI, *Reading Akkadian Prayers & Hymns: An Introduction*, Atlanta 2011, 49–53; 465–74, an *OB Ikribu*–Like Prayer to Shamash and Adad, 85–104.

95 LENZI, *Reading* (n. 94), 465.

96 LENZI, *Reading* (n. 94), 20; SAA4, no. 102; I. EPH'AL, *The City Besieged: Siege and its Manifestations in the Ancient Near East*, Jerusalem 2013, 19–23.

24–25 A *tamītu* concerning Hammurabi's going on a campaign to seize Kasalluhu.

49 by disturbing, overturning, pushing, by revolt,
 50 by trickery, by siege, by smooth talk,
 51 by undermining, by sheer might, by encircling,
 52 by heaping up earth, by causing distress,
 53 by (cutting off) food supply, by breaching (the walls),
 54 by siege tower, by battering ram, by claw,
 55 by ladder, by boring engines,
 56 by cutting through the wall, by ramp,
 57 by spreading confusion, by causing panic,
 58 by the robber's dagger, by hunger,
 59 [by] famine, by want, by thirst,
 60 [by] soaking in water, by night in the open,
 61 [by] as many [tricks] as there are,
 62 they will [not] surround [the...] armies that are stationed in the city, will they,
 63 [will not] destroy their wall,
 64 will not seize their city gate,
 65 will not cut off their [escape route],
 66 will [not] desecrate their temples,
 67 will not everywhere set [fire]
 68 to their houses, their [buildings], their property,
 69 will not take, rob or carry off [the...].
 70 which are in this city,
 71 will not take them captives,
 72 refugees, prisoners or fugitives,
 73 will not bring about their collapse, defeat and overthrow
 74 will not cause noise, dismay? From confusion and panic
 75 within this city,
 76 will not reduce them to shrieking,
 77 will not turn them into a ruin heap, will they?
 78 Or, the resident senior man who lives in that city
 79 will not go out of his mind,
 80 will not lose his reason, will not confer with the enemy army,
 81 will not open the bridge of the city gate,
 82 and will not send out the troops, the sphere of Marduk
 83 and Samsu-ditana, son of Ammi-saduqa, king of Babylon,
 84 will not allow the enemy army into the city, will he?

95 A *tamītu* concerning the safety of the city.⁹⁷

Lines 49–61 are probably the most detailed specification of the various techniques of besieging a city from the times of the ancient world. The Greeks had little such equipment before the Hellenistic age.⁹⁸

97 LAMBERT, *Babylonian* (n. 91), 24–9. ND 5492 (IM 67692).

The means of questioning show first of all that the questioner was experienced in matters of war and that every aspect of war was treated seriously; there was no place for the smallest mistake. It is observable that the presence of the gods has a very special impact on the success of the expedition.

In the NA queries to Shamash, an entire complicated battle strategy was drawn out on a papyrus and placed before the god (in front of his cult statue in the temple). The questioner then asked “Should this particular strategy, on this document, be followed?” The strategy was not written out in detail, like the other queries, but put before the god in the form of a drawing or diagram. The god, in the guise of his cult statue, observed the document and gave his response through the entrails of the sacrificial animal, which was offered at the same time as the submission of the document for divine consent. The oracle was described as having been written (*šatāru*) into the body of the animal, just as other omens were written into the sky or the city and could be read by expert seers.⁹⁹

Alexander experienced the same kind of divination at Siwah. Before the meeting of Alexander with the god Ammon, Callisthenes reported on the process of consulting the oracle of Ammon.¹⁰⁰ The procedure was quite typical of Egyptian temples.¹⁰¹

The kings want assurance from the gods that their weapons and army will prevail.¹⁰² The result of extispicy, whether the god’s answer was ‘yes’ or ‘no’, was arrived at by calculating the sum of positive and negative, favorable and unfavorable, omens from the vari-

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- 98 Herodotus described the different defensive techniques connected to siege; stone towers (I 163, III 54), deep ditches (I 174), rural strongholds (V 62), border walls (VI 36, VII 176, VII 223). The Persians army drew on a Near Eastern tradition of siege technology, see Hdt. I 162, IV 200, VI 18, I 190–1, VI 101, I 84, III 152–58, I 98–9, I 77–181, IV 124, IX 65; J.W. LEE, “The Persian Army in Herodotus”, in: R.B. Strassler (ed.), *The Landmark Herodotus: The Histories*, New York 2007, 808–9. See more: LAMBERT, *Babylonian* (n. 91): 144, 147; I. EPH’AL, “Ways and Means to Conquer a City: Based on Assyrian Queries to the Sungod”, in: S. Parpola and R.M. Whiting (eds.), *Assyria 1995: Proceedings of the 10th Anniversary Symposium of the Neo-Assyrian Text Corpus Project: Helsinki, September 7–11, 1995*, Helsinki 1997, 49.
- 99 BAHRANI, *Rituals* (n. 1), 188.
- 100 Curt. IV 7.15–24; D.S. XVII 50.6.
- 101 This way of divination is typically Egyptian. Particularly, a papyrus dated to the fourteenth year of pharaoh Psamtik I (651 BC) shows the image of the god, Amun-Re, carried on a boat-shaped litter by twenty priests, while the enquirer stands in front facing the procession. H.W. PARKE, *The Oracles of Zeus: Dodona, Olympia, Ammon*, Oxford 1967, 200. The god gave the responses by nods and signs, and similarly method we know from the Greek culture, as Callisthenes reported (Str. XVII 1.43). Gods might spontaneously enter their statues and cause them to move, weep, or do various other things, which their worshippers were then expected to interpret. Lucian tells us about a statue of Apollo in Hierapolis/Bambyce (a popular ancient resort city near the Euphrates) that was especially renowned for this sort of behavior. It moved around on its throne whenever it wanted the temple priests to pick it up; if they delayed too long, it would move more vigorously and begin to sweat. Once they had picked it up, the statue indicated to them the direction in which it wanted to be carried. After the statue had reached a place where it was happy, the high priest would ask it questions. If the statue moved backwards, the answer was ‘no’; if it moved forward, the answer was ‘yes’. There are mentioned similar statues in Egypt at about the same time (Cic. *Div.* I 74, I 98–9, II 58; Luc. *D. Syr.* 36; cf. D.S. XVII 50–1).
- 102 D. NADALI, “Assyrian Open Fields Battles: An Attempt at Reconstruction and Analysis”, in: J. Vidal (ed.), *Studies on War in the Ancient Near East: Collected Essays on Military History*, Münster 2010, 130.

ous organs.¹⁰³ After summing the signs, the reports were either very favorable, favorable, unfavorable, very unfavorable.¹⁰⁴ In questions concerning a siege, the king asks the gods about the strategies he should use. Once this is known, the capture of the city by the Assyrian king must be certain.¹⁰⁵ There are letters to Esarhaddon which make an explicit appeal to the gods in relation to the king's military success. In one the writer reiterates the idea that it is the gods who are the active agents on the battlefield, bringing victory to the king whose role is passive:

“all the [gods of hea]ven are ready (for battle). [May they march] in the presence of the king, my lord, and [bring] the enemies of the king, my lord, [quick]ly to submission before the feet of the king, m[y] lo[rd]! May they let] the wishes of the king, [my] lord, [be fulfilled].”¹⁰⁶

In another one Esarhaddon is given *carte blanche* to pursue his opponent (“if there is an enemy of the king, my lord, in the West, the king, my lord, may do as he pleases”) and the reassurance that he will succeed (“the king, my lord, will capture (him), and the king will defeat him. These are definite words”).¹⁰⁷ This possibility is given to the king as a reward for his ‘just policy’ and is presented as the gods’ consequent recompense.¹⁰⁸

Among the hundreds of queries to Shamash from the reign of Esarhaddon and Ashurbanipal, nine relate to the fate of cities that were in danger of siege by enemies of Assyria or enemy cities that the Assyrian kings planned to capture. One has to do with the same type of question as in the case of the OB *tamītus*.

“Will they capture the city of GN through friendliness or peaceful negotiations (which result in) a treaty invoking the names of god and goddess, or by force? By famine, hunger and want, or by thirst? Or by waging war, or by powerful weapon? By (scaling) ladders, or by means of battering rams, or a tunnel, or a breach? Or by water that softens [bricks]? Or by negligence (of the defenders), or through lack (of soldiers in the city)? Or through insurrection, revolt and rebellion? Or through any ruse of capturing a city? Will they enter that city?”¹⁰⁹

There are a large number of examples of queries from NA period associated with military affairs:

Will Army of Assyria Retake Dur-Illil?

(2) [Dur-Illil, a fortress of Esarhaddon], king of Assyria, located on the border [of Mannea, which the Manneans captured] and took possession of –

103 OPPENHEIM, *Ancient* (n. 8), 206–27, see: FLOWER, *Seer* (n. 8), 161.

104 KANG, *Divine* (31): 43.

105 M. COGAN, *Imperialism and Religion: Assyria, Judah and Israel in the Eight and Seventh Centuries B.C.E.*, Missoula MT 1974, 20.

106 *SAAT6*, no. 132.

107 *SAAT0*, no. 168.

108 See: C.L. CROUCH, *War and Ethics in the Ancient Near East: Military Violence in Light of Cosmology and History*, Berlin 2009, 134–7.

109 EPH'AL, *Ways* (n. 98), 51, nos. 8–25.

(4) should [NN together with men, hors]es, and an army, as (great as) he wishes, go [to capture that city, Dur-II]lil and (will they),

(6) be it by means of [war, or by means of friendliness and peace]ful negotiations, [or by means of a tunnel or breach, or by means of] hunger,

(8) or through lack [of soldiers in the city], or by means of ramps, [or by ...]..., o[r by ..., or through any ru]se of conquering a city,

(11) [will the army of Esarhaddon, king of As]syria, [capture] that city, Dur-IIIil? [Will they conquer it]? Will it be delivered to them?¹¹⁰

Should the Assyrian Army Wage War against Šamaš-šumu-ukin?

(11) Should the men, horses, and army of Assurbanipal, king of Assyria, strive and plan? Should they go, cross the reed marshes which confront them, and pitch camp at Bab-sami?

(17) After they have pitched (camp), should [they] wage war against the men and arm[y] of Šamaš-šumu-ukin?

(r 3) If they wage (war), will the weapons of the men and army of Assurbanipal, king of Assyria, prevail over the w[eapons of the m]en and army [of Šamaš-šumu-ukin]?¹¹¹

Will the Assyrian Army Prevail over Šamaš-šumu-ukin's?

(r 2) Will [the weapons of]... prevail over the weapons of the men [and army] of Šamaš-šumu-u[kin]?

(r 5) (When) the extispicy was performed, [its] favorable omens [were numerous, its] unfavorable ones [few].¹¹²

Astrology

In conjunction with the prophetic divinatory texts, there are a number of scholarly and epistolary texts which refer to other types of divinatory legitimation for warfare. One refers to the state of the Moon as the reason why “the cities of the Mannean will be plundered, his people taken in captivity, and he himself will be encircled in his palace until he will be delivered into the hands of the king, my lord.”¹¹³ Esarhaddon received a number of letters and astrological reports from the chief lamentation-priest (*galamāhu*) of Sin from Haran.¹¹⁴

Most omens derived from eclipses were unfavorable, a successful prediction would give the scholars and the king more time to prepare actions against an approaching danger.¹¹⁵

110 *SAA4*, no. 30.

111 *SAA4*, no. 287.

112 *SAA4*, no. 288.

113 *SAA10*, no. 112.

114 S.W. HOLLOWAY, *Aššur is King! Aššur is King! Religion in the Exercise of Power in the Neo-Assyrian Empire*, Leiden/Boston 2002, 482.

115 *SAA8*, no. 19.

Generally, an eclipse is a source of troubles: and either plague will strike the king's army at the command of a god, or it may be defeated on the battlefield by force of arms, and a revolution may take place in the palace.¹¹⁶

The NA texts direct particular attention to the period of eclipse. During Esarhaddon's reign there were no fewer than twelve full or partial lunar eclipses and two solar ones.¹¹⁷ The most extreme situation posed by an omen was that of the lunar eclipse that portended the death of the king.¹¹⁸ The lunar eclipse which occurs in the month Tishrin is a source of war, and a great crisis in Babylon.¹¹⁹

Eclipse of the Moon in the Morning.

(r 9) "If there is an eclipse in Sivan (III) on the 14th day: a mighty king who is famous will die, but his son who had been designated for kingship will take the throne, and there will be hostility, variant: there will be deaths."¹²⁰

The solar eclipses also portended evil:

"The last solar eclipse was not in Subartu's quadrant and Jupiter was visible, which is propitious: the king will go to war."¹²¹

At present we know of 122 tablets including 2065 lines of observations of eclipses and oracles taken from these eclipses, as well as predictions based on the movements of the Moon.¹²²

Diodorus stresses great appreciation to Alexander for the skills of Chaldaeans,¹²³ especially in the area of astrology.¹²⁴ The special attention to lunar signs is typical of the attitude of Alexander. A lunar eclipse as a sign of success also appears in his campaigns. On 20/21 September 331 BC (month Boëdromion), after Alexander had crossed the Euphrates and Tigris rivers, he rested for two days. During the night an eclipse of the moon occurred. Curtius says that the consternation in the army bordered on mutiny. Alexander assembled

116 No. 2b (lunar eclipse), ll. 27–8, in: LAMBERT, *Babylonian* (n. 91), 47.

117 E. LEICHTY, "Esarhaddon, King of Assyria", in: SASSON (ed.), *Civilizations* (n. 32), I–II, 953; W. FARBER, "Witchcraft, Magic, and Divination in Ancient Mesopotamia", in: SASSON (ed.), *Civilizations* (n. 32), III–IV, 1903.

118 F. ROCHBERG, *The Heavenly Writing: Divination, Horoscopy, and Astronomy in Mesopotamian Culture*, Cambridge 2004, 77. The observation of the lunar phases has very important meaning, see L. BRACK-BERNSSEN and H. HUNGER, "TU 11: A Collection of Rules for the Prediction of Lunar Phases and of Month Lengths", *SCIAMVS*, III (2002), 3–90.

119 *AM* 212:19–213:2, in: C. MÜLLER-KESSLER, "Aramäische Beschwörungen und Astronomische Omina in nachbabylonischer Zeit. Das Fortleben mesopotamischer Kultur im Vorderen Orient", in: J. Renger (ed.), *Babylon: Focus Mesopotamischer Geschichte, Wiege früher Gelehrsamkeit, Mythos in der Moderne. 2. Internationales Colloquium der Deutschen Orient-Gesellschaft 24.–26. März 1998 in Berlin*, Saarbrücken 1999, 437.

120 *SAAS*, no. 4.

121 See C. JEAN, "Divination and Oracles at the Neo-Assyrian Palace: The Importance of Signs in Royal Ideology", in: A. Annus (ed.), *Divination and Interpretation of Signs in the Ancient World*, Chicago 2010, 272.

122 BOTTÉRO, *Mesopotamia* (n. 8), 128, fig. 3.

123 D.S. XVII 116.4.

124 D.S. II 30–1. See E. MURPHY, *The Antiquities of Asia: A Translation with Notes of Book II of the Library of History of Diodorus Siculus*, New Brunswick/Oxford 1989, 39; 41.

his officers (Curtius) to hear a declaration from his own *mantis* Aristandros (Arrian) and from Egyptian seers (Curtius). They proclaimed that Helios favored the Greeks and Selene the Persians; hence the eclipse portended the victory of the Macedonians.¹²⁵ Soldiers obeyed the soothsayers more readily than their own leaders.¹²⁶

Augury

Bird oracles are strictly connected with war.¹²⁷ The strength of this kind of mantic lay in the fact that it was a difficult sign to manipulate.¹²⁸ As a consequence, Livy comments, “such great honor was brought to the auguries and the priestly office of the augurs that no action was taken, in war or in the city, without the auspices: assemblies of the people, levies of the troops, all the greatest affairs would be broken up if the birds did not approve.”¹²⁹

It was the Assyrian practice to drain an annexed country of its specialists, and the *augurs* from the service of the Shubrian royal house would have certainly been used by the Esarhaddon's court.¹³⁰ A letter to Sargon II illustrates why the group of *augurs* travelling with the Assyrian army was kept under watch; their strategic importance guaranteed them a comfortable standard of living and a powerful social position.¹³¹

Birds of prey in particular were viewed as omens by the Mesopotamians.¹³² “If a raptor seizes prey, and flies before the king and lifts up the prey in its beak, the king will achieve victory and conquering over his enemy”. In the Penelope's dream: “In my dream I saw a great eagle with a curved beak swoop down from the mountain and break their (geese) necks, killing them. There they lay heaped in the great hall, while he soared up into the clear sky...”¹³³ Mesopotamia:

“If a raptor seizes prey, and flies before the king and breaks the prey with its beak, the king will achieve victory and conquering over his enemy”. “If a raptor seizes prey, and flies before the king and lifts up the prey in its beak, the king will achieve victory and conquering over his enemy”.¹³⁴

In 331 BC at Gaugamela, those who were around Alexander saw above the king's head an eagle quietly flying, which was not terrified by the clash of arms, nor by the groans of the dying. It is certain that Aristander kept pointing out the bird to the soldiers, who were intent

125 Arr. *An.* III 7.6; Curt. IV 10.1–5; Plu. *Alex.* 31.4; Plin. *Nat.* II 180; Cic. *Div.* I 53; cf. PRITCHETT, *Greek* (n. 7), 112.

126 Curt. IV 5.7.

127 J. HAZENBOS, “Der Mensch denkt, Gott lenkt. Betrachtungen zum hethitischen Orakelpersonal”, in: C. Wilcke (ed.), *Das geistige Erfassen der Welt im Alten Orient. Sprache, Kultur und Gesellschaft*, Wiesbaden 2007, 103.

128 RADNER, *Assyrian* (n. 25), 233.

129 Liv. I 36.2–6; Cic. *Div.* I 17.32.

130 RADNER, *Assyrian* (n. 25), 237.

131 *SAAS*, no. 163.

132 S.M. FREEDMAN, *If a City is Set: The Akkadian Omen Series Šumma Alu in Mēlê Šakin*, I: Tablets: 1:21, Philadelphia 1998, tablets 64–79.

133 Hom. *Od.* XIX 536–59.

134 F. NÖTSCHER, *Die Omen-Serie šumma âlu ina mēlê šakin*: (CT 38–40), Rome 1930, 168–9; S.B. NOEGEL, *Nocturnal Ciphers: The Allusive Language of Dreams in the Ancient Near East*, New Haven 2007, 200.

upon fighting, as a sure omen of victory (this roused confidence of the Greeks and terror among the Persians). A great courage filled the beholders, and after mutual encouragement and exhortation the cavalry charged at full speed upon the enemy and the phalanx rolled on after them like a flood.¹³⁵

Another example presents Alexander taking a siesta during the siege of Halicarnassos (334 BC), in this moment a swallow circled over his head chattering noisily and perched first on the bed and then on his head, awakening him. The *mantis* Aristandros interpreted this to mean the treachery of some friend and that the treachery would come to light. “The swallow is a domestic bird, friendly to man, and a greater chatterer than any other bird”.¹³⁶ In 332 BC at Gaza a carnivorous bird dropped a stone on Alexander’s head while he was sacrificing a victim. Aristandros interpreted the omen as portending the capture of the city, but added, “For today you must guard yourself.” Alexander disobeyed the seer’s words and was severely wounded during the siege.¹³⁷

Dreams

Dreams were a very important part of divination. Their importance was based on the fact that the gods could directly contact the king. Some were clear while others were obscure, and here there was need for some qualified or inspired interpreter. In Mesopotamia, a mantically important dream which was not immediately clear, had to be interpreted regardless of whether it had been solicited through the incubation ritual or appeared spontaneously. This was done by the *bārû* as well as by male and female ‘questioners’ (Sum. *ensi*, Akkad. *ša’ilu(m)*, *šailtum*) who clarified the relationship between the dream content and future happenings.¹³⁸ According to Oppenheim, *bārû* as the Greek *oneiropolos* did not interpret dreams but sought to contact the deity by means of incubations-dreams.¹³⁹ The dreams were explained by a professional - an *oneirokritēs*, in Homer they were called *oneiropolos*.¹⁴⁰ In emergencies, kings are reported to resort to incubation in order to obtain divine help or advice.¹⁴¹ There are some very well-known dreams of the NA king Ashurbanipal:

The Crossing of the River Idid’e

“The army saw the river Idid’e, which was a raging torrent, and was afraid of crossing. (But) the goddess Ishtar who dwells in Arbela let my army have a dream in the midst of the night (addressing them) as follows: “I shall go in front of Ashur-

135 Curt. IV 15.26–28; Plu. *Alex.* 33.2.

136 Arr. *An.* I 25.6–8; cf. PRITCHETT, *Greek* (n. 7), 107.

137 Arr. *An.* II 26.4–27; cf. PRITCHETT, *Greek* (n. 7), 107; Curt. IV 6.11–12 tells about a raven and a clod of dirt. This raven got stuck in bitumen and was caught by the bystanders at the city’s walls. Aristander foretold the destruction of the city and the danger that king would be wounded. Plu. *Alex.* 25.3 says about a clod of earth, which had been dropped from on high by a bird, struck him on the shoulder.

138 MAUL, *Divination* (n. 11), 368.

139 A.L. OPPENHEIM, *The Interpretation of Dreams in the Ancient Near East, with a Translation of an Assyrian Dream Book*, Philadelphia 1956, 223.

140 Hom. *Il.* I 63.

141 OPPENHEIM, *Interpretation* (n. 139), 188; 192.

banipal, the king whom I have created myself!" The army relied upon this dream and crossed safely the river Idid'e."¹⁴²

The Dream of the Priest of Ishtar

"Ishtar heard my desperate sighs and said (to me in a *theophany*): 'Be not afraid (that you see me)!' (This alone) put confidence in my heart (and she continued): 'I have (already) had mercy upon you on account of the prayer you performed (and because) your eyes were full of tears.' (And indeed) in the midst of the (very same) night in which I addressed myself to Ishtar, a *šabru*-priest went to bed and had a dream. He woke up with a start and Ishtar made him see a "nocturnal vision". He reported (it) to me as follows: "The goddess Ishtar who dwells in Arbela entered (the room), quivers hanging at her right and left, holding the bow in her (one) hand, the sharp sword drawn (ready) for battle. She stood before you, speaking to you like a real mother. (Then) Ishtar, the most high among the gods, called you to give you the following order: 'Wait with the attack (because) wherever you intend to go, I, myself, shall set out for!' (Then) you said to her as follows: 'Wherever you go, I will go with you, Supreme Lady!' (But) she repeated (her command) as follows: 'You stay here, the place where you (should be); eat, drink wine, make merry, pay homage to (my) godhead while I shall go and accomplish this task and make you obtain your heart's desires! (Then) your face will not be pale, your feet will not shake (any more) and you need not wipe off your (cold) sweat (even) in the thick of the battle!' (Thereupon) she wrapped you in her sweet (smelling) baby-sling protecting your entire body. (Then) her countenance shone like fire and she went out (of the room), in rage to defeat your enemies, proceeding in the direction of Teumman, king of Elam, who had made her very angry."¹⁴³

References to written messages of a certain length that were deemed to have divinatory relevance occur in a few Mesopotamian dream reports. Two passages from inscriptions of the Assyrian king Assurbanipal can serve as examples. In the first, Assurbanipal writes that a man, while dreaming, saw a cult pedestal of Sin on which it was written that the moon-god would persecute and destroy all the enemies of the king who refused to submit to him. This one is called *A Warning Dream*: on the eve of the revolt of Shamash-shumu-ukin, the royal inscriptions note that a man (*ethu*) had a dream:

"on the socle of Sin it is written "Upon those who plot evil against Ashurbanipal, king of Assyria, and resort to (actual) hostilities, I shall bestow miserable death, I shall put an end to their lives through the quick iron dagger (of war), conflagration, hunger (and) pestilence (The disease of Irra)!" This (dream) I (Ashurbanipal) heard and put my trust upon the word of my lord Sin."¹⁴⁴

142 See OPPENHEIM, *Interpretation* (n. 139), 249.

143 OPPENHEIM, *Interpretation* (n. 139), 249.

144 OPPENHEIM, *Interpretation* (n. 139), 249–50. Another one translation: "I will grant a wretched death to whoever plots evil or acts in a hostile way against Assurbanipal, King of Assyria! With the swift iron dagger, "downfall of Girra," famine, (and) pestilence of Erra will I put an end to their lives! This (word) I heard and I trusted the word of Sin." See B. BORGER, *Beiträge zum Inschriftenwerk Assur-*

In the second passage, Assurbanipal claims that the Lydian king Gyges sent messengers to him after he had seen the Assyrian king's 'name' (*nibit šumi*), apparently in some written form, in a dream. Both episodes are reminiscent of the famous 'writing on the wall' in the Belshazzar story of the *Bible*, even though the latter does not feature dreams.¹⁴⁵

Pausanias claimed that *mantis* should be good at explaining dreams, interpreting the flight of birds and the entrails of sacrifices. The earliest known Greek dream-book, that of Antiphon, dates from the fifth or fourth century BC.¹⁴⁶ Artemidorus' *Oneirocritica* shows a distinction between the right and left side, meaning of the dreams, *i.e.*, if one dreams a bad thing, it means a good thing.¹⁴⁷

Alexander also had prophetic dreams.¹⁴⁸ In 332 BC during the siege of Tyre, Alexander had a dream in which Heracles had appeared to him and offered him his right hand and led him to the city. The *mantis* Aristandros interpreted the dream to mean that Tyre would be taken, but with much toil, for toil was the mark of Heracles' labors.¹⁴⁹ While besieging Tyre, Alexander dreamed that he saw a satyr. Both sources agree that the *mantis*, by dividing the word 'satyros' into 'sa and 'tyros' ("Tyre is yours"), said to Alexander, "Tyre is to be thine". Oriental dream books based most of their interpretations of dream elements upon a similarity of sounds and a resemblance between words, and that punning played an enormous role in the ancient civilizations of the East.¹⁵⁰

Alexander's great courage in times of danger was connected with some omens that he obtained. In Macedonia in a dream he saw a man more august and venerable than an ordinary human being, who advised Alexander to follow him to Asia, in order to overthrow the Persian Empire. During his stay in Phoenicia he met a Jewish priest who recognized the apparition which he had seen in his sleep. The procession of Jews propitiated Alexander in Jerusalem and invited him to the temple. Alexander venerated the name of God and visited the temple, sacrificed to God, inspected the sacred books, which contained prophecies written long before, among them that Tyre would yield to the Macedonians.¹⁵¹

After Ptolemy was wounded, Alexander had a vision in his sleep. It seemed to him that a snake appeared carrying a plant in its mouth and showed him its nature and efficacy and the place where it grew. When Alexander awoke prophecy was fulfilled.¹⁵² A similar dream arrived to Alexander while Craterus was sick. Alexander had a vision, whereupon he offered certain sacrifices for the recovery of his friend, and bade him also to make sacrifices.¹⁵³

banipals die Prismenklassen A, B, C = K, D, E, F, G, H, J und T sowie andere Inschriften, Wiesbaden 1996, A iii 118–27.

145 E. FRAHM, "Reading the Tablet, the Exta, and the Body: the Hermeneutics of Cuneiform signs in Babylonian and Assyrian Text Commentaries and Divinatory Texts", in: Annus (ed.), *Divination* (n. 121), 99.

146 Paus. I 34.4; cf. PRITCHETT, *Greek* (n. 7), 93.

147 NOEGEL, *Nocturnal* (n. 134), 224, ref. no. 128.

148 Heracles had helped him, see Arr. *An.* II 18.

149 Arr. *An.* II 18.1; Curt. IV 2.17; cf. PRITCHETT, *Greek* (n. 7), 100.

150 Plu. *Alex.* 24.5; Artem. IV 24; cf. PRITCHETT, *Greek* (n. 7), 100.

151 J. *AJ.* XI 334–335.

152 D.S. XVII 103.6–8; Curt. IX 8.26–7 (in this version the king asked for carrying a lot of herbs and he found appropriate after the color of the herb).

153 Plu. *Alex.* 41.3.

The incorrect interpretation of a dream could be a source of serious difficulties or even disaster. In 333 BC Darius was encouraged by a certain dream, which the *magi* interpreted in such a way as to be pleasing to him rather than as probability demanded. For he dreamed that the Macedonian *phalanx* was all on fire, and that Alexander, attired in a robe which he himself formerly used to wear when he was a royal courier, was waiting upon him, after which service he passed into the temple of Belus and disappeared. By this means, as it would seem, it was suggested to Darius from Heaven that the exploits of the Macedonians would be conspicuous and brilliant, that Alexander would be a master of Asia, just as Darius became its master when he was made king instead of royal courier, and would speedily end his life with glory.¹⁵⁴

Teratology (teratomancy)

Teratomancy (from Greek *téras* ‘monster’ and *manteia* ‘prediction’), the procedure of deriving insights into the future from the malformations of newborn humans and animals was one of the most important Babylonian divination methods.¹⁵⁵

Cicero reported: “When a woman dreamed that she had been delivered of a lion, this signified that the country in which she had the dream would be conquered by foreign nations”,¹⁵⁶ which was connected with the legend surrounding the birth of Pericles, mentioned first by Herodotus and later by Plutarch in his biography about Pericles. Agariste, the mother of Pericles, when she was pregnant, dreamt that she gave birth to a lion, and then a few days later she bore Xanthippus a son.¹⁵⁷ The significance of the omen in Herodotus – whether the dream suggests that Pericles would be a blessing or a curse for Athens – is ambiguous and obscure. As we have seen, the relation of *Šumma Izbu* depends on the specific circumstances of birth. The Greeks probably borrowed the motif from the heritage of the ANE but they do not borrow the appropriate knowledge and treaties to interpret this case clearly and instead relied solely upon the intuitions and mystery of ancient cultures (and legends).

The much less known motif of abnormal birth is related to the story of Alexander the Great. According to the Babylonian oracles for Alexander III’s 14th year (Philip III’s first year), 323 BC, “eve give birth and [the newborn had] three heads and necks, three buttocks, 6..., 3...”¹⁵⁸ The more detailed but of course less reliable source for this information one can find in the *Alexander Romance*.

“A monstrous child was born: the upper part of its body, as far as the navel, was completely human and according to nature, but the lower extremities were those of a wild beast. And its general appearance was like that of Scylla except that it differed in the kinds of animals and in the great number of them. For there were the shapes of

154 Curt. III 3.2–3; Plu. Alex. 18.4–5; cf. PRITCHETT, *Greek* (n. 7), 100.

155 MAUL, *Divination* (n. 11), 367.

156 Cic. *Div.* I 121.

157 Hdt. VI 131.2; Plu. *Per.* 3.1–4.

158 R. STONEMAN, *Alexander the Great: A Life in Legend*, New Haven/London 2008, 186.

leopards and lions, wolves and wild boars and of dogs. And these forms moved, and each was clearly recognizable to all. And the child was dead and his body blue”.¹⁵⁹

The most important Chaldean sign-readers did not have doubts that this omen predicted the death of Alexander. The element of the lion did not play the main role in this interpretation but suggested that the author probably knows the meaning of the teratological omens related to the lion in *Šumma Izbu*.

There are further examples of lion birth omens related to fortune and misfortune in the series *Šumma Izbu*. It is absolutely normal for Mesopotamian civilization and the final meaning depends on skills for correctly deciphering the omens. First the positive ones:

“If a woman of the palace gives birth, and (the child) has the face of a lion – the king will have no opponent.”¹⁶⁰

“If a ewe gives birth to a lion – the weapons (which were) abandoned will be raised; the king will have no opponent.”¹⁶¹

“If a ewe gives birth to a lion, and it is completely enveloped with tallow – the king will have no opponent.”¹⁶²

“If a ewe gives birth to a lion, and it has only one eye, but on its forehead – weapon of Sargon; the prince will seize universal kingship.”¹⁶³

“If a ewe gives birth to a lion, and it has the head of a ram – sign of Sargon who ruled the world.”¹⁶⁴

“If a ewe gives birth to a lion, and it has the head of a fox – omen of Sargon.”¹⁶⁵

“If a ewe gives birth to a lion, and it has the body of a ram, and the head of a lion – omen of Sargon who ruled the world.”¹⁶⁶

“If a mare gives birth to a lion – the prince will become strong.”¹⁶⁷

And the negative ones:

“If a woman gives birth, and (the child) has a lion’s head – there will be a harsh king in the land.”¹⁶⁸

“If a woman gives birth, and (the child) has the ear of a lion – there will be a harsh king in the land.”¹⁶⁹

159 *The Romance of Alexander the Great by Pseudo-Callisthenes*, ed. A.M. WOLOHOIJAN, New York/London 1969, 147, 18–19.

160 E. LEICHTY, *The Omen Series Šumma Izbu*, Locust Valley 1970, 71, 4.56 (Text A, D); 73, 5.1.

161 LEICHTY, *Omen* (n. 160), 72, 4.1 (Text B).

162 LEICHTY, *Omen* (n. 160), 79, 5.64.

163 LEICHTY, *Omen* (n. 160), 76, 5.33.

164 LEICHTY, *Omen* (n. 160), 77, 5.43.

165 LEICHTY, *Omen* (n. 160), 77, 5.44.

166 LEICHTY, *Omen* (n. 160), 81, 5.87.

167 LEICHTY, *Omen* (n. 160), 182, 20.20’.

168 LEICHTY, *Omen* (n. 160), 46, 2.1.

“If an anomaly has the face of a lion – there will be a harsh king, and he will weaken that land.”¹⁷⁰

“If a woman gives birth to a lion – that city will be seized; its king will be put in fetters.”¹⁷¹

“If a ewe gives birth to a lion, and it has matted hair – reign of mourning; the land will be full of mourning; attack of an enemy.”¹⁷²

“If a ewe gives birth to a lion, and its tongue covers its eyes – [...] the king’s land will rebel.”¹⁷³

“If a ewe gives birth to a lion, and its head is the head of a horse (and) its body the body of a lion – omen of Naram-Sin who ruled the land.”¹⁷⁴

The Izburn and other omens based on monstrous birth are known of related to lions, originating from OB: *Omen Lists from Southern Mesopotamia, Standard Babylonian Omens from Humans Births, Late Old Babylonian Omen Lists from Tigunānum*,¹⁷⁵ *Omens from the Liver: bāb ekalli and šulmu*.¹⁷⁶

§10 “(If) a miscarried foetus straight from its mother’s womb has long hair like a lion’s mane located on its right jaw: the king will have no equal.”¹⁷⁷

§61 “(If) a miscarried foetus has long hair like a lion’s mane situated [on] its left [jaw:] the enemy’s army will encounter none that can withstand it.”¹⁷⁸

Rev. II 1 “If a woman gives birth and (the baby) has a lion’s head: [there will be] a mighty king in the land.”¹⁷⁹

Terrestrial omens

Terrestrial signs did not refer to an unalterable future since the diviners were trained to avert the potential misfortune before it could happen.¹⁸⁰ The omens were collected in *Šumma ālu* “If a city”.¹⁸¹ It includes items of the type that the Greeks called (enodios) sym-

169 LEICHTY, *Omen* (n. 160), 52–53, 3.1 (Text A, B, D, E).

170 OB version = YOS 10 56, 202, 1.11.

171 LEICHTY, *Omen* (n. 160), 32, 1.5.

172 LEICHTY, *Omen* (n. 160), 77, 5.39.

173 LEICHTY, *Omen* (n. 160), 79, 5.70.

174 LEICHTY, *Omen* (n. 160), 81, 5.88.

175 “Omens from Monstrous Births”: MS 1805, no. 19, & 3–4, 7, in: GEORGE (ed.), *Babylonian* (n. 46), 118–119.

176 “Omens from the Liver: bāb ekalli and šulmu”. No. 24, obv. & 17, in: GEORGE (ed.), *Babylonian* (n. 46), 160.

177 “Omens from Monstrous Births among Sheep”. MS 3000, no. 12, obv. & 10, in: GEORGE (ed.), *Babylonian* (n. 46), 55.

178 “Omens from Monstrous Births among Sheep”. MS 3000, no. 12, obv. & 61, in: GEORGE (ed.), *Babylonian* (n. 46), 59.

179 “Omens from Human Births”: MS 1808, no. 35, rev. II 1, in: GEORGE (ed.), *Babylonian* (n. 46), 261.

180 MAUL, *Divination* (n. 11), 366.

181 FARBER, *Witchcraft* (n. 117), 1907.

bolos or symbolon, that is, something that one happens to encounter, for example seeing a lizard of a particular colour on the road. As for the *klēdōn* (vocal omen, one hears something that in a specific situation has ominous significance), there is an Akkadian equivalent *egerrû*.¹⁸² The series *Šumma ālu*¹⁸³ contains also a set of omens concerned with destruction and restoration of temples, monuments, and sculptures.

The Tyrians bound the statue of Apollo with a chain of gold to its base and attached the chain to the altar of Heracles, to whose divine power they had dedicated their city.¹⁸⁴ Alexander removed the golden chains from Apollo and gave orders to call him 'Apollo Philalexander'.¹⁸⁵

When Alexander set out upon his expedition (334 BC), the wooden image of Orpheus at Leibethera in Macedonia sweated profusely. The *mantis* Aristandros interpreted this in such a way that it would be much toil to writers to sing of Alexander and his exploits (would cost poets and musicians much toil and sweat to celebrate).¹⁸⁶ The seer Aristander had to explain what meaning to attach to the constantly sweating statue of Orpheus at Pieria.¹⁸⁷ Different tales are also known of about sweating and weeping statues.¹⁸⁸ Herodotus speaks of statues sweating on the Acropolis at the approach of the Persians or of a priestess who grew a beard when her city, Pedasa, was threatened.¹⁸⁹ Before the arrival of Alexander to Thebes the sculptures sweated. At the moment of the arrival of Alexander the statues in the market place were seen to burst into perspiration and be covered with great drops of moisture. People reported that the marsh at Onchestus emitted a sound very much like a bellow, while at Dirce a bloody ripple ran along the surface of the water. Finally, travelers coming from Delphi reported that the temple which the Thebans had dedicated from the Phocian spoils was observed to have blood-stains on its roof. Similar stories emerged before the battle of Chaeroneia,¹⁹⁰ and Leuctra in 371 BC, where the statue of Heracles was sweating.¹⁹¹ Many such cases were described in Roman history.¹⁹² Moving objects of worship is a common practice amongst the ancients,¹⁹³ mentioned by Philon from Byblos.¹⁹⁴

Darius at the beginning of his rule had ordered that the form of the Persian scimitar scabbard should be changed to the shape which the Greeks used and that the Chaldeans had

182 M.L. WEST, *The East Face of Helicon: West Asiatic Elements in Early Poetry and Myth*, Oxford 2003, 49.

183 FREEDMAN, *If a City* (n. 132).

184 D.S. XVII 41.6–8; Plu. Alex. 24.3–4; Curt. IV 3.22.

185 D.S. XVII 46.6; Plu. Alex. 24.4.

186 Plut. Alex. 14.5; Arr. An. I 11.2; cf. PRITCHETT, *Greek* (n. 7), 131.

187 Arr. An. I 11. This need not be an anecdotal incident, as even the random variations on the surface of the royal statues in Assyria were interpreted as a bad omen for the king and the whole country; BAHRANI, *Rituals* (n. 1), 98.

188 PRITCHETT, *Greek* (n. 7), 130.

189 Hdt. VII 140.

190 D.S. XVII 10.4; Schol. A.R. IV 1284.

191 Cic. Div. I 74.

192 The status also tell and cry, see N. ICARD-GIANOLIO, "L'image culturelle manifestation de prodiges, II", in: *ThesCRA ThesCRA*, Los Angeles 2004, 466–7.

193 It was known in the Minoan civilization of Crete. Two tablets written in Linear B containing the term „Te-o-po-ri-ja” found at Knossos, see ICARD-GIANOLIO, "L'image" (n. 192), 477.

194 FGrH 790 F4 [Eus. P.E. 1.10.2].

at once declared that the empire of the Persians would pass to those whose arms he had imitated.¹⁹⁵ In 334 BC, at Xanthos (Lykia) the previous sign was confirmed by a new one, there were found the old bronze tablets with promise of the destruction of the Persian Empire.¹⁹⁶

During the siege of Tyre the worrying omen of a sea-monster appeared, and broken pieces of bread had a bloody look. The Tyrians also saw streams of blood flowing out from the midst of the flames, interpreting this as portending the destruction of the Macedonians. Aristander declared that if the blood had flown from without, it would be an unfavourable omen for the Macedonians; but on the contrary, since it flowed from an inner part, it foretold destruction for the city which they besieged.¹⁹⁷

Theophrastos says that the *mantis* call portends spontaneous changes in the character of trees and their fruit. Unfavorable portents are changes from acidic to sweet and from cultivated to wild fruit.¹⁹⁸ Pliny informs that the work of Alexander's *mantis* Aristandros was full of examples of the portentous behavior of trees in Greece.¹⁹⁹

A comet in month Ayar means great riots and the slavery of Babylon.²⁰⁰

Two Meteors:

(1) "[If] a meteor flashes from eas[t] to west and sets, and interrupts its train and puts it (again): the enemy's troops will fall in battle."

(5) "If a star which is like a torch, *i.e.* like a reed torch, flashes from east to west and sets: the main army of the enemy will fall."²⁰¹

Homer was convinced that meteor would be widely seen a portent, as it was for the Babylonian seers.²⁰² One of the ominous portents announcing the death of Alexander was a meteor which was like a torch.²⁰³ The another sign was a lion which was attacked in 323 BC at Babylon by a tame ass and kicked to death.²⁰⁴

Hemerologies

A specific moment of the calendar could be ominous, the favorable (αἵσιοι) and unfavorable days (ἀποφράδες) are known of. One can observe some similarity in the treatment of the zodiacal year of Euktemon to the Babylonian lists. It is important to emphasize that this

195 Curt. III 3.6.

196 Plu. *Alex.* 17.2. Similar omens Arist. *Mir.* 57; Ach. Tat. VIII 11; Plin. *Nat.* II 228; cf. PRITCHETT, *Greek* (n. 7), 129.

197 Curt. IV 2.13–14.

198 Thphr. *HP* II 3.1.

199 Plin. *Nat.* XVII 243.

200 AM 275:25–27, in: MÜLLER–KESSLER, *Aramäische* (n. 119), 438.

201 *SAAS*, no. 335, l. 5.

202 Hom. *Il.* IV 75–84; cf. WEST, *East* (n. 182), 49, ref. no. 206.

203 The Babylonian oracles for year 14th of Alexander III (year 1st of Philip III), 323 BC, see STONEMAN, *Alexander* (n. 158), 186.

204 Plu. *Alex.* 73.4, cf. PRITCHETT, *Greek* (n. 7), 138.

influence, if it is such, took place long before the apogee of astrology in the Greek world.²⁰⁵ The Babylonian said about half day lucky and half unlucky so did the Greeks.²⁰⁶

During the siege of Tyre, when Alexander's *mantis* Aristander predicted that he would take the city 'this month,' Alexander simply changed the calendar and lengthened the month by a few days and thus fulfilled the prediction instead of allowing his *mantis*' prediction to fail.²⁰⁷ In Macedonia it was unlucky for the army to take the field in the month of Daisos (or Daesius).²⁰⁸ This unlucky feature of the month Alexander circumvented at the battle of the Granikos by calling this month an intercalary Artemisios.²⁰⁹

Conclusions

Divination was in Mesopotamian civilization one of the most important tools for communicating with gods, seeking their help and gaining acceptance for king's deeds. This relation is so fundamental that without understanding this phenomenon it is impossible to comprehend Mesopotamian civilization at all.

There are totally different historical testimonies referring to Alexander's approach to divination. According to Curtius, Alexander knew how much power a vain religious scruple had over uneducated minds. The oft-repeated story being an example of manipulation is the late anecdote which Polyainos has ascribed to Attalos I of Pergamon, and Frontinus to Alexander and Eumenes of Cardia. Soudinos, a Chaldean *mantis* (note that he is not Greek, but Babylonian), to encourage morale wrote with dye the words "victory of the king" backwards on the palm of his hand, pressed the smooth side of the liver with the significant words inscribed on it to the gaze of the army, who regarded it as a sign sent by gods. They charged with extraordinary vigor and defeated the Gauls.²¹⁰

Before crossing the river Tanais, Aristander declared through Erigyus that the signs of the victims were unfavorable. Alexander angrily called him and said: "Not as a king, but secretly as a private person, I ordered you to offer a sacrifice. Why did you announce what was portended by it to another rather than to me?" Ashamed Aristander said that he predicted a contest of great, but not fruitless labor. Alexander understood that the gods granted him glory. After new inspection of entrails, Aristander said that they were exceptionally favourable.²¹¹

According to Plutarch, Alexander always supported prophecy zealously.²¹² It is observable that the interpretation of Alexander's attitude toward divination depends mostly on the author of the account and his assessment of divination and its effects on humanity. Whatever the assessment, the evidence presented in the text leave no doubt as to the important role of divination in the campaigns of Alexander. The far-reaching convergence of the

205 PRITCHETT, *Greek* (n. 7), 209, ref. no. 177.

206 Hes. *Op.* 810–13, 821; PRITCHETT, *Greek* (n. 7), 218–9; S. LANGDON, *Babylonian Menologies and the Semitic Calendars*, London 1935.

207 Plu. *Alex.* 25.

208 Plu. *Alex.* 16.2.

209 PRITCHETT, *Greek* (n. 7), 229.

210 Plu. *Mor.* 214f; Fron. *Str.* I 11.14–5; Polyaen. IV 20.

211 Arr. *An.* IV 4.3 says that Aristander did not change his predictions; Curt. VII 7.22–9.

212 Plu. *Alex.* 25.

methods, motives and decisions concerning divination leaves no doubt that the Greeks were largely the heirs of their eastern neighbors.

Belephantes to Alexander: An Astrological Report to a Macedonian King?

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1 The Belephantes Hypothesis

In 2003, Robartus van der Spek published an indispensable collection of cuneiform sources on Alexander the Great. In addition to an edition and translation of these texts, van der Spek established their astrological context and advanced several historical interpretations.¹ Among the historical interpretations, van der Spek advances an exciting prosopographical hypothesis. The “Belephantes Hypothesis” equates the individual identified as Belephantes by Diodorus with the astronomer Bēl-apla-iddin known from cuneiform sources. Van der Spek carefully frames the possibility in scientific language:

“Diodorus is the only one to give a name to the leader of the Chaldaean delegation: Belephantes (XVII 112.3). Belephantes is evidently a corrupted name influenced by Greek popular etymology: *Bel* + *elephas* (-ntos) and personal names like Belerophontes and Diophantos. Nevertheless, it seems not to be off the mark to recognize here the Babylonian name Bēl-apla-iddin. As a matter of fact, we do know a Babylonian astronomer with this name who lived and worked in this very period... Bēl-apla-iddin/Belephantes may have become a name known in Greece as well.”²

Thus, van der Spek outlines a specific hypothesis but stops short of claiming any historicity for the identification. The hypothesis has been left for others to confirm or deny. Before a linguistic assessment of the identification of Belephantes with *Bēl-apla-iddin*, the range of ancient accounts which might preserve variants of this account should be reviewed, and the account by Diodorus established within this context.

2 The Babylonian Omen Episode

Although the name “Belephantes” appears in only Diodorus, five surviving accounts relate the “Babylonian Omen Episode.” Diodorus composed the earliest surviving account of this episode (50 BC).³ Diodorus drew heavily from Cleitarchus, but van der Spek suggests that Diodorus may have derived some details from the history of Nearchus.⁴ The proposal that only Diodorus based his account of the Babylonian Omen Episode on Nearchus may explain why the earliest account deviates from the later compositions which could also access Cleitarchus. According to Diodorus, while Alexander was outside Babylon, the astrologers

1 R. VAN DER SPEK, “Darius III, Alexander the Great and Babylonian Scholarship”, in: W. Henkelman and A. Kuhrt (eds.) *Achaemenid History*, XIII, Leiden 2003, 289–346. For the edition and translation, see 297–324; for context, see 289–297; for historical interpretations, see 324–340.

2 VAN DER SPEK, “Darius” (n. 1), 333.

3 D.S. XVIII 112.2–6.

4 VAN DER SPEK, “Darius” (n. 1), 353.

noticed an oracle of the stars (τῆς τῶν ἀστέρων μαντείας) which implied the death of the king. Through Nearchus, messengers led by Belephantes indirectly advised Alexander against entering the city and suggested rebuilding the tomb of Belus (τοῦ Βήλου τάφον) and abandoning his route. Alexander travelled another hundred stadia, relented, and sent his entourage ahead until Anaxagoras demonstrated the error of omens and Alexander entered the city with his army.

Roughly 170 years after Diodorus, Plutarch reported another version of the Babylonian Omen Episode.⁵ Plutarch reports that Nearchus advised Alexander against entering the city at the suggestion of “Chaldaeans” – perhaps astrologers, perhaps diviners, possibly only Babylonians.⁶ Plutarch relates that Alexander rejected the advice until he arrived at Babylon and saw fighting crows. According to Plutarch, Alexander queried these omens through divination by hepatoscopy and received baleful results. Plutarch then adds more dire omens: the death of a lion and a divinely-inspired imposture by Dionysius of Messenia, whom Alexander “removed” (ἡφάνισεν), and presumably killed. Plutarch dwells at length on bad omens and Alexander’s increasing suspicion as part of his theme of Alexander’s turning from piety to superstition.

Around AD 145, Arrian composed another account of the Babylonian Omen Episode.⁷ Arrian writes that after crossing the Tigris, some Chaldaeans privately reported an oracle from the god Bel (λόγιον...ἐκ τοῦ θεοῦ τοῦ Βήλου) that Alexander should not enter Babylon. Alexander objected, but the Chaldaeans advised changing his approach from west to east. Alexander abandoned the difficult eastern approach and grew suspicious that the priests were defrauding the temple treasury. Arrian then repeats Plutarch’s story of Alexander’s inauspicious hepatoscopy, citing Aristobulos as the source. Arrian reports that Alexander met Greek embassies but neglects to mention if Alexander audited the supposedly pilfered temples. Not only does Arrian credit Aristobulos directly, but internal evidence also suggests he relied on the account of Ptolemy.⁸

About twenty years later, Appian followed the literary model of Plutarch and embellished his account of Caesar with comparisons to Alexander. Appian cites the Babylonian Omen Episode as a parallel to the Ides of March prophecy.⁹ Again, Alexander had not yet entered Babylon, when several Chaldaeans protested his entry. Like Arrian, Appian reports that the Chaldaeans advised approaching Babylon not towards the west, but facing the east. Appian further specifies that this advice was frustrated by a lake and a swamp. Nevertheless, the account largely conforms to those of Plutarch and Arrian.

The third-century historian Justin composed the final ancient account which could have incorporated material lost to modern historians. Justin reports that before entering Babylon, Alexander met with many foreign embassies, and one of the Magi (*quidem ex magis*) issued a warning.¹⁰ Alexander acquiesced and entered Borsippa on the other side of the Euphrates,

5 Plu. *Alex.* 73.1–74.1.

6 For astrological uses, see Plu. *Gal.* 23.4.7; *Mar.* 42.7.1, .8.4; *Mor.* 370c6 and 1028e11. For geographical uses, see Plu. *Luc.* 19.1.4 and *Sull.* 5.5.7. For another ambiguous case of a Mesopotamian with (dubious) astral wisdom, see Plu. *Mor.* 386a8.

7 Arr. *An.* VII 16.5–17.5.

8 N. HAMMOND, *Sources for Alexander the Great*, Cambridge 1993, 141.

9 App. *BC* II 153.3–10.

10 Just. XII 13. The invocation of “Magi” is troublesome.

where Anaxarchus philosophically denounced the prophecy. Alexander returned to Babylon, rested for several days, and commenced drinking. Excessive drinking was blamed for his death, but Justin argues for a conspiracy.

These five accounts differ slightly in detail. Hence, the details permit different interpretations. Modern attempts at contextualization and historical analysis must consider these variations.

3 Against the Belephantes Hypothesis

Because Mesopotamians frequently reused names, prosopography relies on a coordination of several elements, specifically the personal name, the patronymic and ancestral filiations, occupation, years of activity, and citations within specific texts.¹¹ Without these elements, the identification of a historical actor is open to debate. The equation of Belephantes and *Bēl-apla-iddin* extends these elements to the account of Diodorus. Van der Spek has diligently collected the Babylonian details. *Bēl-apla-iddin*, son of *Mušallim-Bēl*, descendant of *Mušēzibu*, worked as an astronomer in Babylon, as shown by a procedure text for Mercury in 325 BC and an astronomical diary of 322 BC.¹² Although van der Spek has established *Bēl-apla-iddin* as a historical actor, none of this evidence relates to his identification with Belephantes.

From a linguistic perspective, the Greek sources from which Diodorus drew had a small set of strategies for rendering foreign names.¹³ Belephantes is not a translation of *Bēl-apla-iddin*, “Bel gives a son.” An attempt to translate *Bēl-apla-iddin* would probably have generated the name *Βελόδορος. Likewise, if Belephantes is assumed to be a calque, or translation, the Babylonian name would probably have been **Bēl-amāru* or **Bēl-izuzu*. Such names may exist, but if this explanation is adopted, the prosopographical identification fails. Nor does Belephantes accurately transliterate *Bēl-apla-iddin*. An ideal transliteration might produce *Βελαπιδίνοϛ, but the translators of the Septuagint rendered the element *-apla-iddin* as βαλαδαν, which conforms to the Hebrew intermediary.¹⁴ In his Canon of Kings, Ptolemy recorded the element *-apla-iddin* as –εμπάδος.¹⁵ Other astronomical authors adopted this rendering.¹⁶ However, if Belephantes is “corrupted... [and] influenced by Greek popular etymology,” the name would be a loanblend of *Bēl-apla-iddin*. Loanblends present phonetic approximations, often deformed by the receiving language, rather than a one-to-one mapping between two languages. In this particular instance, the Akkadian words *epinnu*, *upānu*, *banītu*, and even *ḫadaššu* conform more exactly to –εφάντης than does *-apla-iddin*. The wide range of phonetic approximations pressed into service by loan-

11 For an enumeration of the key elements, see K. RADNER, *The Prosopography of the Neo-Assyrian Empire*, I.1, Helsinki 1998, xii–xiii.

12 VAN DER SPEK, “Darius” (n. 1), 333.

13 For the development of the field, see E. OSKAAR, “The History of Contact Linguistics as a Discipline”, in: H. Goebel et al. (eds.), *Kontaktlinguistik: ein internationales Handbuch zeitgenössischer Forschung*, Berlin 1996, 1–12. For the model used here, see R. ANTILA, *An Introduction to Historical and Comparative Linguistics*, New York 1972, 154–178.

14 LXX, 1 Ch., 7.29, 4 Ki. 20.12.

15 Ptol. *Handy Tables* 1.3.

16 Papp. 62.6, Theo. Sm. in Ptol. 1042.11 and Georgius Syncellus, *Ecloga chronographica*, 246.25.

blends does not eliminate *-apla-iddin* as a possible origin, but the multiplicity of possible names reduces the certainty of the identification.

Aside from attempts at phonetic rendering, three other possibilities might account for the name Belephantes. First, Belephantes may have been adopted by a Babylonian for use in Greek contexts. Similar strategies were used in Egypt, where Greeks occasionally adopted Egyptian names and Egyptians often adopted Greek names.¹⁷ In this case, the Greek name may have no connection to the Babylonian name. Secondly, Belephantes might have served as an archetypal name, equivalent to “a Babylonian.” Archetypal names, such as “Ivan” for Russians or “Paddy” for Irishmen, equate every foreign personal name with one, easily assimilated name. In this instance, the name works well as an archetypal name: Belephantes preserves almost no unaltered information except the fact that the bearer was born in Babylon, where Bel was the city-god and popularly incorporated in names. Against this interpretation, no other Belephantes appears in other accounts of Babylon. Finally, Belephantes can be explained not as a personal name, but as a title: “a priest of Bel.” If Belephantes is interpreted as a title and not a name, the word permits a sensible etymology. Several other Greek words which terminate in *-φάντης* have religious meanings. This pattern of morphology appeared as early as Herodotus who discussed the *ιεροφάντης* in Egypt. The same pattern endured to generate *Σεβαστοφάντης*, the title of a priest of Augustus. Other cases include the newly-initiated *νεοφάντης*, the debauched *ὀργιοφάντης*, and the cryptic *τυμβοφάντης*. The interpretation of Belephantes as a priestly title agrees with the other accounts which describe “Chaldaeans” or “Magi.” Against this reading, though, Diodorus explicitly records Belephantes as a personal name (*ὄνομα*). Still, Diodorus may have misinterpreted a laconic source which was clearer to other authors.

4 The Eclipse Omen Hypothesis

Although the identity of Belephantes might not be resolved with absolute certainty, his report of an oracle of the stars (*τῆς τῶν ἀστέρων μαντείας*) has enchanted historians of astrology. In the introduction to the cuneiform sources on Alexander, van der Spek has contextualized the report of Alexander’s conquest of Babylon within the framework of Mesopotamian astrology.¹⁸ In particular, the *Astronomical Diary* which reports the victory of Alexander also includes the description of a preceding lunar eclipse, and van der Spek considers the lunar eclipse of 20 September 331 BC in light of Mesopotamian omen literature. Van der Spek delineates the importance of eclipses with respect to Babylonian astral omens and proposes an “Eclipse Omen Hypothesis,” namely, that an eclipse prompted the report of Belephantes. Barring the rediscovery of ancient sources, this hypothesis cannot be confirmed or denied, but the narrative accounts of the Babylonian Omen Episode may be coordinated with the practices surrounding Mesopotamian celestial omens.

5 Theory and Practice of Mesopotamian Omens

A brief outline of the mechanics of Mesopotamian omens establishes a framework for understanding the identification and interpretation of omens, as well as the response to them.

17 S. SHERWIN-WHITE and A. KUHRIT, *From Samarkand to Sardis: A New Approach to the Seleucid Empire*, Berkeley/London 1993, 151–152.

18 VAN DER SPEK, “Darius” (n. 1), 289–297.

These omens stand apart from various divinations which requested a sign from the gods.¹⁹ The omen began with the god Ea who, as a precondition to divinatory communication, knew the future and had written works on astral divination.²⁰ Wanting to inform humanity of his fore-knowledge, this god created omens. These omens included a range of anomalous events, often divided between celestial signs and earthly signs.²¹ Humanity, as the second precondition to divinatory communication, understood that these wonders were communicative rather than causative. After observing the omen, people engaged in three theoretically separate processes. First, they collected records of these omens for the benefit of future generations. Secondly, they decoded these omens by comparing past records of similar omens with historical events. This process of decoding often invoked empirical reasoning to separate these omens into their constituent elements, but priests also employed divination to clarify omens.²² Finally, priests attempted to avert the presaged future, either by practical preparations or by apotropaic rituals.²³ In response to this model of communication,²⁴ the Mesopotamian astrologers developed three distinct steps of astrological labor. First, these scholars made astronomical predictions of ominous celestial phenomena. The predictability of the phenomena did not lessen the communicative power of the omen. Rather, the prediction focused the time of observation for unpredictable elements of the omen, such as thunder or color or the direction of wind. Secondly, the sages produced an astrological prediction by consulting omen literature relevant to the predicted event. These savants could collate predictions from some predicted details such as the month or day of an event, but the other equally important elements listed above required astronomical observation. Likewise, an unmanifested astronomical prediction had no ominous importance. Only after the confirmation of the omen through observation could the priests undertake the final step, the execution of proper preparations. Although an unambiguous confirmation of the Eclipse Omen Hypothesis requires primary sources, the narrative accounts of the Babylonian Omen Episode can be coordinated with these three phases of astrological practice.

6 Astronomical Prediction

In his account of the Babylonian Omen Episode, Diodorus reports that astronomers had noticed an “oracle of the stars” (τῆς τῶν ἀστέρων μαντείας). The phrase is ambiguous: an astrological oracle may have been derived from the stars, but an astronomical oracle may have been equally well prepared for the stars. That is, the astronomers may have made an astronomical prediction. The other accounts of the Babylonian Oracle Episode do not clar-

19 U. KOCH-WESTENHOLZ, *Mesopotamian Astrology: An Introduction to Babylonian and Assyrian Celestial Divination*, Copenhagen 1995, 10–12.

20 For the role of Ea, see W. LAMBERT, “A Catalog of Texts and Authors”, *JCS* 16.3 (1962), 69 n. 7. For his ability to intervene, see E. REINER, *Astral Magic in Babylonia*, Philadelphia 1995, 81–82.

21 For an ancient expression of this division, see A. OPPENHEIM, “A Babylonian Diviner’s Manual”, *JNES* 33.2 (1974), 199 and 203. Line 24 reads, “i-da-at AN-e it-ti KI-tim-ma ša-ad-da i-na-aš-šá-a” (the signs in the sky just as those on the earth give us signals).

22 For evidence of this practice, see G. DOSSIN, “Lettre du devin Asqudum au roi Zimrilim au sujet d’une éclipse de lune”, in: *Compte rendu de la seconde Rencontre assyriologique internationale organisée à Paris du 2 au 6 juillet 1951*, Paris 1951, 46–48.

23 REINER, *Astral* (n. 20), 81–82.

24 F. ROCHBERG, *In the Path of the Moon: Babylonian Celestial Divination and its Legacy*, Leiden/Boston 2010, 414.

ify the astronomical content of the report. Plutarch merely implies that the report was astrological by placing the report in the mouths of “Chaldaean.” Elsewhere, Plutarch simply uses “Chaldaean” as a geographic descriptor. Arrian also invokes Chaldaeans, but describes the message as an oracle from the god Bel (λόγιον...ἐκ τοῦ θεοῦ τοῦ Βήλου). This oracle, though, need not preclude an astral omen. The word λόγιον often refers to long-standing omens and can distinguish omens composed in verse, but the terminology agrees with Babylonian usage. Cuneiform sources also use the metaphor of language, specifically *qību* “(oral) command” or *tērtu* “(verbal) order,” to discuss celestial omens.²⁵ Appian and Justin offer no clarification whether the prediction was astronomical or astrological.

Fortunately, the reconstruction of the Saros cycle used to predict eclipses is well understood.²⁶ The reconstructions of eclipse predictions show that Mesopotamians preferred to predict eclipses which would not happen rather than miss eclipses. (Mathematically speaking, Mesopotamian astrologers preferred Type I errors to Type II errors.) The modern reconstructions of the dates for which astronomers advised watching for eclipses highlight two striking possibilities: a solar eclipse was predicted for 12 April 323 BC and a lunar eclipse on 28 April 323 BC.²⁷ These dates do not represent observed eclipses, but rather dates for which Babylonians were expecting an eclipse. In fact, the *Astronomical Diaries* confirm (in an admittedly broken passage) that a watch was kept for an eclipse in this month but that the eclipse never occurred.²⁸

7 Astrological Prediction

Although the predictions of Babylonian astronomers can be reconstructed, the interpretations of these events by Babylonian astrologers present deeper problems. Mesopotamian astrological texts present celestial omens as conditional, if-then statements.²⁹ A small set of variables appears in the protasis, or if-clause. Month of the year, day of the month, time of day or night, duration of the eclipse, and other details of the appearance all serve as variables in astral omens.³⁰ Obviously, the surviving omen literature can be combed for protases which match the astronomical prediction, either in whole or in part. However, this approach presumes a greater familiarity with Mesopotamian astrological traditions than is possible. First of all, *Enūma Anu Enlil*, the principal Mesopotamian astrological text, survives in fragments. Secondly, this tradition was augmented by non-canonical (*aḥu*) tablets, which modern scholars are unlikely to know, unless they are cited by other texts. Not only would the astrological prediction have been cobbled together from the protases of several known and unknown texts, but the result was also subject to interpretation according to an oral tradition. In fact, an attempt to reconstruct this tradition from the letters and reports of

25 For the semantic range of Babylonian omen terminology, see ROCHBERG, *In the Path* (n. 24), 414–415.

26 J. STEELE, “Eclipse Prediction in Mesopotamia”, *Archive for the History of the Exact Sciences* 54 (2000), 421–454.

27 For the solar eclipse, see STEELE, “Eclipse” (n. 26), table 4, col. 9, row 16; for the lunar eclipse, see table 2, col. 24, row 21.

28 A. SACHS and H. HUNGER, *Astronomical Diaries and Related Text from Babylonia*, I, Vienna 1988, No. -322, ln. 32, “solar eclipse, omitted,” ([AN-KU₁₀ šam]áš BAR DIB).

29 ROCHBERG, *In the Path* (n. 24), 378–382.

30 F. ROCHBERG, *Aspects of Babylonian Celestial Divination: The Lunar Eclipse Tablets of Enūma Anu Enlil*, Horn 1988, 36.

the practitioners quickly results in contradiction and ambiguity. For example, the *Astrological Reports to Assyrian Kings* demonstrates how the simple description of a color may be variously interpreted. The scholar Nabû-mušeši read the protasis “If Leo is black” as indicative of Mercury occupying Leo.³¹ However, the scribe Šumaya clarified the same protasis as a reference to Saturn, “the black star,” occupying Leo.³² An unknown scribe extended the reading to Mars.³³ The scribes Akkullanu, Zākir and Ašarēdu specifically addressed the meaning of metaphor to note that “black” has several meanings: “to be dark,” “to be peaceful” clarified as “standing in a stable position,” or being in a black cloud.³⁴ None of these interpreters mentioned the planets or whether “standing in a stable position” could be reinterpreted as the sign of Cancer, as Nabû-aḥḫē-erība suggested in a discussion of stable positions.³⁵ Clearly, the selection of the astrological omens proper for an astronomical event cannot be reconstructed accurately.

Just as the protases of omens tend toward formulaic enumerations of possible variations, the then-clauses, called apodoses, are somewhat repetitive, although also occasionally open to interpretation. The content of the report by Belephantes to Alexander does agree nicely when compared with the range of apodoses preserved in Mesopotamian eclipse omens. According to Diodorus, Belephantes announced four points: (1) the life of the king was in jeopardy, (2) the king should re-erect the “tomb of Bel,” (3) he must not enter the city, and (4) he should abandon his intended route. The first two elements conform to common apodoses from omen literature. As Hunger and Pingree have noted “[e]clipses are among the most dangerous omens.”³⁶ The death of a king is a common apodosis for both lunar and solar eclipses. The key question is which king. Likewise, the instruction that the king should rebuild the tomb of Belus (τοῦ Βήλου τάφον) agrees more closely with the common apodosis that the “temples of the great gods will be rebuilt,” than it resembles advice for winning the favor of Bel. This apodosis seems not to appear among eclipse omens, but rather among planetary omens.³⁷ The *Astronomical Diary* for 323BC reports a western station for Saturn observed on 16 or 17 April, a western appearance of Venus observed on 25 April but predicted for 20 April, and the last eastern appearance of Mercury observed on

31 H. HUNGER, *Astrological Reports to Assyrian Kings*, Helsinki 1992, No. 146. This interpretation has multiple exemplars: Nos. 113, 245, 337, 371, 437, 477, 504 and 545.

32 HUNGER, *Astrological* (n. 31), No. 180. This interpretation also has multiple exemplars: No. 40, 49, and 324.

33 HUNGER, *Astrological* (n. 31), No. 502.

34 HUNGER, *Astrological* (n. 31), Nos. 107, 304, and 330, respectively.

35 HUNGER, *Astrological* (n. 31), No. 39.

36 H. HUNGER and D. PINGREE, *Astral Sciences in Mesopotamia*, Leiden 1999, 6.

37 The record of preservation underscores the danger of presuming too much knowledge about the interpretive practice of Babylonian astrology. No apodosis similar to “then the temples of the great gods will be restored” (DINGIR.MEŠ GAL.MEŠ GIBIL.MEŠ *ana* É.MEŠ-šú-nu) appears in either E. REINER, *Babylonian Planetary Omens* III, Groningen 1998 or E. REINER, *Babylonian Planetary Omens* IV, Leiden 2005, the two published collections of planetary omens from *Enūma Anu Enlil*. The phrase is found in BM 36746+36842+37173, published by ROCHBERG, *In the Path* (n. 24), 53–60. The phrase is broken but restored on the strength of A. GRAYSON and W. LAMBERT, “Akkadian Prophecies”, *JCS* 18 (1964), 20. Several scribes cite the same phrase as an apodosis to planetary phenomena in HUNGER, *Astrological* (n. 32), Nos. 175, 245, 247, and 414.

27 April.³⁸ Because the western station of Jupiter on 5 May occurred after both eclipse predictions, this phenomenon seems an unlikely contender.³⁹ The last two elements, (3) and (4), however, may relate to attempts to avert ominous astrological predictions, rather than the predictions themselves.

8 The Substitute King Hypothesis

Some modern scholars have coupled the advice that Alexander not enter Babylon with the mysterious “Stranger on the Throne Episode” and interpreted the two elements as some form of Babylonian ritual. Because this interpretation developed alongside modern Assyriology, several versions of the Ritual Usurper Hypothesis have been advanced. Early scholars conflated the *Sacaea* festival and the *Akitu* festival of the Babylonian New Year and related the Stranger on the Throne Episode to a substitute king of the *Sacaea* Festival.⁴⁰ Later interpretations separated the *Sacaea* festival from the *Akitu* but linked this episode with the *Akitu* festival of the Babylonian New Year.⁴¹ Meanwhile, Assyriologists clarified their understanding of the Substitute King (*šar puḫi*) Ritual and concluded it was independent of either festival.⁴² Recent analyses have explained the Stranger on the Throne Episode by reference to the Substitute King (*šar puḫi*) Ritual.⁴³ One particular form of the ritual

38 SACHS and HUNGER, *Astronomical* (n. 29), No. -322, ln. 20, 24 and 25: “Saturn became stationary in the west” (GENNA ana ŠÚ ki UŠ-a), “Venus appeared in the west in Aries” ([dele-bat ina ŠÚ ina HUN-GÁ IGI]) and “Mercury’s last appearance in the east in Pisces” (GU₄-UD ina NIM ina zib^{mc} ŠÚ), respectively.

39 SACHS and HUNGER, *Astronomical* (n. 28), No. -322, ln. 30: “Jupiter became stationary in the west” (MÚL BABBAR ana ŠÚ ki UŠ-a).

40 For the inspiration of this scholarship, see J. FRAZER, *The Golden Bough*, IV, London 1911³, 113–116; and IX, London 1913, 354–359. For its application to Alexander, see H. BERVE, *Das Alexanderreich auf prosopographischer Grundlage*, II, Munich 1926, No. 278 and E. MEDERER, *Die Alexanderlegenden bei den ältesten Alexanderhistorikern*, Stuttgart 1936, 32 n. 5. For a compelling calendric counter argument published shortly after the second edition of *The Golden Bough*, see A. LANG, *Magic and Religion*, London 1901, 142–143.

41 For an early guarded proposal, see TH. JACOBSEN, “Early Political Development in Mesopotamia”, *ZA* 52 (1957), 139 n. 115. Jacobsen advances the interpretation as a conclusion in a footnote and considers only the account of Plutarch. For the first interpretation of the episode as a New Year’s Day ritual, see L. PEARSON, *The Lost Histories of Alexander the Great*, Oxford 1960, 158 n. 50. For identification of the episode with the *Akitu* festival, see S. EDDY, *The King is Dead: Studies in the Near Eastern Resistance to Hellenism, 334–31 B.C.*, Lincoln 1961, 109–110. For a conflation of these rituals with the *šar puḫi* rites, see H. KÜMMEL, „Ersatzkonig und Sundenbock“, *ZATW* 80.3 (1968), 289–318, which collects all the ancient sources and summarizes the proposals which associate fertility rites with New Year festivals.

42 For the first insight that the Substitute King ritual was not an annual event, see W. VON SODEN, „Bücherbesprechung“, *Zeitschrift für Assyriologie* 43 (1936), 251–298, which reviews E. EBELING, *Tod und Leben nach den Vorsielluhgen der Babylonier*, Berlin 1931.

43 For a proposal that the New Year’s Day had some astrological significance, see H. MONTGOMERY, „Thronbesteigung und Klagen“, *Oath* 9 (1969), 13. For the initial introduction to astral aspects of the *šar puḫi* rites, see S. PARPOLA, *Letters from Assyrian Scholars to the Kings Esarhaddon and Assurbanipal*, I, Neukirchen 1971, 54–65. For a proposal which builds on KÜMMEL, „Ersatzkonig (n. 41)“ but suggests that Greeks misunderstood the ritual as an omen, see J. SEIBERT, *Alexander der Grosse*, Darmstadt 1972, 174. For a refutation of *Sacaea* and New Year’s Day festivals in favor of the Substitute King Ritual and a suggestion that the ritual was performed incorrectly, see R. LANE FOX, *Alexander the Great*, New York 1973, 548–549. For the introduction of Serapis as a late Ptolemaic attempt to explain

usurper, the Substitute King Hypothesis, depends on the Babylonian Omen Episode having been inspired by an eclipse. While Babylonian astrologers were certainly expecting eclipses on 12 and 28 April 323BC, the scope of ancient accounts of this episode must be reviewed and established within the context of the practice of the Substitute King Ritual.

9 The Stranger on the Throne Episode

Whereas the Babylonian omen episode appeared in five versions, only three ancient accounts relate the Stranger on the Throne Episode. Furthermore, these three accounts differ considerably. The earliest account by Diodorus reports that Alexander entered into Babylon, where he received embassies and buried Hephaestion.⁴⁴ After the funeral games, Alexander witnessed two omens before his death. The first omen was the Stranger on the Throne Episode which occurred when Alexander was at his bath. A Babylonian prisoner, finding himself miraculously free, entered the palace, where he donned Alexander's robe and diadem and sat in the chair. Diodorus reports that Alexander was terrified but calmly questioned the Babylonian prisoner, who made no answer. Diodorus further relates that Alexander reported the event to diviners, at whose suggestion Alexander executed the strange pretender. Diodorus concludes the episode with Alexander's connecting the event to his ill-omened entry into Babylon.

For Plutarch, the episode constitutes one of the welter of omens after Alexander's entry into Babylon and marks his descent into superstition.⁴⁵ According to Plutarch, Alexander had disrobed for exercise, and his friends noticed someone on the throne, silent, in diadem and robes. The pretender remained silent but eventually declared himself Dionysius of Messenia, who had been brought on a boat as a prisoner in chains. Plutarch reports that Dionysius explained that Serapis had miraculously freed him and told him to don the robe and diadem and to sit silently on the throne. Again, Babylonian diviners directed Alexander to kill the man.

a misunderstood ritual, see S. LAUFFER, *Alexander der Grosse*, Munich 1978, 185 n. 31. For a thorough review of the literature, see K. SMELIK, "The 'Omina Mortis' in the Histories of Alexander the Great", *Talanta* 10/11 (1978/1979), 102–108. For an excellent comparison of the agreement of the accounts and a wider interpretation which borders on a folkloric interpretation, see J. BONCQUET, "Klassieke reminiscenties aan een Assyrische ritus. Bedenkingen bij Diodorus Siculus II, 20, 3–5", *Handelingen van de koninklijke zuidnederlandse maatschappij voor taal en letterkunde en geschiedenis* 35 (1981), 25–45. For a thorough explanation of the astral aspects of the *šar puhi* rite, see S. PARPOLA, *Letters from Assyrian Scholars to the Kings Esarhaddon and Assurbanipal*, II, Neukirchen 1983, xxii–xxxii. For a blunt declaration that the ritual was "très clairement évoqué" by the sources, see P. BRIANT, *Histoire de l'empire perse de Cyrus à Alexandre*, Paris 1996, 746. For a rare expression of discomfort with the hypothesis, see E. FREDRICKSMEYER, "Alexander and the Kingdom of Asia," in: A. Bosworth and E. Baynham (eds.), *Alexander the Great in Fact and Fiction*, Oxford 2000, 160 n. 73. For the present state of the hypothesis, see VAN DER SPEK, "Darius" (n. 1), 336. For a tacit adoption of the hypothesis which ironically emphasizes the importance of observing celestial and terrestrial signs together, see I. HUBER, „Ersatzkönige in griechischem Gewand: Die Umformung der *šar puhi*-Rituale bei Herodot, Berossos, Agathias und den Alexander-Historikern“, in: R. Rollinger (ed.), *Von Sumer bis Homer, Festschrift für Manfred Schretter zur Vollendung des 60. Lebensjahres*, Münster 2005, 371–372.

44 D.S. XVII 116.

45 For the omens generally, see Plu. *Alex.* 73–74. For the Stranger on the Throne Episode specifically, see 73.7–9.

Arrian reports the Stranger on the Throne Episode as the culmination of several ill-omens after Alexander's entry into Babylon.⁴⁶ According to Arrian, Alexander was reviewing the army when thirst compelled him to leave his seat. A lowly man, perhaps kept under guard but not in chains, sat in the seat. Foreign custom compelled the onlookers not to intervene but rather lament. Alexander, suspecting conspiracy, tortured the hapless pretender to no end – the man ascribed his acts to a whim. Arrian reports that the diviners interpreted this occupation as a bad omen but not that they directed his execution.

Thus, the three accounts differ considerably. Alexander may have been bathing, exercising, or reviewing troops. The usurper may have been a Greek or Babylonian, probably a prisoner, although variously bound or unbound. The usurper may have worn the robe and diadem or merely sat in the throne. This incident was observed by a fearful Alexander, his entourage, or foreign onlookers bound by inscrutable conventions. Although initially silent, the usurper may or may not have broken his silence, perhaps as a result of torture, and explained his actions as either the suggestion of Serapis or caprice. In all accounts, though, the event is identified as an omen rather than a happenstance, ritual, or affront to Alexander's office.

10 Against the Substitute King Hypothesis

According to the model of Mesopotamian omens, the apotropaic rituals (*namburbi*) prompted by an eclipse ought to occur after the actual observation of the eclipse.⁴⁷ The reconstruction of this model derives from the letters of Mesopotamian scholars to the king. The observation allowed for mitigating elements, including omitted eclipses, the omen-negating presence of Jupiter, or other modifications which demanded observation. Taking these observations into account, the chief exorcist or a group of scholars determined the need for a Substitute King Ritual. A comparison of eclipses mentioned in letters which confirm the execution or omission of Substitute King Rituals shows that only 8 of 16 observed eclipses merited the ritual.⁴⁸ In one special case, the eclipse of 27 December, 671 BC, the scholars approved a Substitute King Ritual before the observation of the eclipse, but the letters which confirm the execution of the ritual also highlight the irregularity of enacting it before the eclipse.

Although some modern scholars couple the Babylonian Omen Episode with the Substitute King Hypothesis, this pairing creates an inconsistency with the standard Mesopotamian practice surrounding astral omens. The Babylonian Omen Episode may have been

46 Arr. An. VII 24.

47 For the rule, see PARPOLA, *Letters* (n. 43), xxiv. For a deliberate exception, see No. 185. For an accidental exception, see S. PARPOLA, *Letters* (n. 43), No. 114. This letter states the rule twice: "(If) an eclipse occurs but is not seen in the capital, that eclipse has passed by" (AN.MI iš-ša-kin-ma ina URU BALA-e la in-na-mir AN.MI BI i-te-ti-iq) and "the great gods who dwell in the city of the king, my lord, covered the sky and did not show the eclipse, so that the king would know that this eclipse does not concern the king, my lord, and his country" (DINGIR^{ME} GAL^{ME} ša ina URU ša LUGAL be-li-ia aš-bu AN-ú ú-šal-lil-ú-ma AN.MI la ú-kal-li-mu um-ma LUGAL lu-ú i-di ki-i AN.MI a-ga-a la ina UGU LUGAL be-li-ia ú KUR-šú šu-ú). The letter also demonstrates the preference for Type I errors to Type II errors: "if they perform the apotropaic ritual of the eclipse..., what harm will that do?" (*al-tap-ra ú ki-i NAM.BÚR.BI ša AN.MI ... i-te-ep-šú mi-nu-ú*).

48 PARPOLA, *Letters* (n. 43), xxiii.

prompted by the astronomical prediction of an eclipse, but rituals to avert this eclipse cannot easily account for the Stranger on the Throne Episode. Because the predicted eclipses of 12 and 28 April 323 BC were not observable in Babylon, no apotropaic ritual would have been necessary in the normal course of events. While at least one Substitute King Ritual was undertaken before the eclipse, the need for a special case complicates the interpretation. When he was absent from Babylon, Alexander would have presumably escaped the effects of the eclipse, and all the sources concur that Alexander was advised against entering Babylon. Diodorus and Plutarch, though, add that the astrologers did not approach Alexander directly, a detail which suggests that Alexander was not officially received as the king. This detail has been interpreted as evidence in support of the Substitute King Hypothesis, but implies that the ritual had been enacted before the eclipse (which was unusual) and in Alexander's absence (before it was necessary).

On the whole, the Stranger on the Throne Episode more closely resembles a separate, terrestrial omen than a ritual – and all the ancient accounts interpret it as such.⁴⁹ The strongest evidence in support of the Substitute King Hypothesis lies not in the proximity of a predicted eclipse to the Stranger on the Throne Episode or the fact that Belephantes addressed Nearchus rather than Alexander but in the assertions of Diodorus and Plutarch that the stranger was a prisoner. The Substitute King was generally a condemned prisoner, but a condemned prisoner would serve as a fitting proxy for any of the Ritual Usurper Hypotheses. Against any of the Ritual Usurper Hypotheses, though, the ethnicity of the sacrificial substitute would seem to have been important. Presumably, Alexander would not have thoughtlessly sacrificed Greeks at the request of foreign astrologers, especially after he had ignored their advice not to enter Babylon. On the other hand, a Babylonian substitute seems equally troublesome, especially if Alexander is to be imagined as suspicious of the astrologers as Arrian suggests.

Only Arrian speculates on the purpose of the injunction that Alexander not enter Babylon, and he links the prohibition on entering Babylon to the restoration of the temple of Bel. This explanation echoes the report by Diodorus that the omen enjoined Alexander to rebuild the tomb of Bel (τοῦ Βήλου τάφον). According to Arrian, Alexander had intended to restore the temple of Bel (τοῦ Βήλου νεῶς) in the middle of Babylon, but those charged with the renovation had accomplished nothing in Alexander's absence. With the temple in ruins, the priests spent the endowments on themselves. Arrian suggests that the astrological delegation sought to prevent Alexander from discovering these conditions. Despite his suspicions (or Arrian's editorializing), Alexander struck a compromise that he would enter the city from the opposite direction. Arrian's interpretation that the priests cynically hoped to prevent Alexander's entry conforms to the Indo-European trope of treacherous astrologers but is not supported by other elements.⁵⁰ First, while the supposed cause of the deceit may have weighed on Alexander's mind, these suspicions are neither confirmed nor denied elsewhere in Arrian's account. Secondly, Alexander sent his entourage ahead and they were

49 D.S. XVII 116.4–5, Plu. *Alex.* 73.3, Arr. *An.* VII 24.1.

50 For the motif, see S. THOMPSON, *Motif-index of Folk-literature: A Classification of Narrative Elements in Folk-tales, Ballads, Myths, Fables, Medieval Romances, Exempla, Fabliaux, Jest-books, and Local Legends*, I–VI, Bloomington, Indiana, 1955–1958, under K2299.1, Treacherous astrologer. By contrast, Semitic sources seem not to distrust the occupation.

received without incident. Finally, the direction of Alexander's entry would hardly change the results of his investigation. On the other hand, the geographic reversal of Alexander's entry into Babylon, the fourth element of the astrological advice ascribed by Diodorus to Belephantes, resembles sound astrological advice more than cynical manipulation.

11 Coordinate Inversion Hypothesis

Among the accounts of the Babylonian Omen Episode, Diodorus, Arrian, Appian and Justin all report that Alexander attempted to change his route in response to the advice of the astrologers.⁵¹ Diodorus reports that Belephantes advised Alexander to stop his chosen route, passing by the city (τὴν βεβουλευμένην ὁδὸν ἐπιστήσας παρέλθῃ τὴν πόλιν). Whether the advice contains two directions or one depends slightly on the reading.

Arrian, however, is clearer and more poetic. After Alexander rebuffs the advice not to enter the city with a line from Euripides, the Chaldaeans retort,

“O king... do not face the west, nor cause the army to go facing in that direction, but rather go around to the east (μὴ πρὸς δυσμὰς ἀφορῶν αὐτὸς μὴδὲ τὴν στρατιὰν ταύτη ἐπέχουσιν ἄγων παρελθεῖν, ἀλλὰ ἐκπεριελθὼν πρὸς ἑω μᾶλλον).”

Alexander followed this advice until he met difficult terrain, an event which Arrian ascribes to a deity. Appian strictly follows Arrian's account. Alexander again replies with a poetic retort, the source of which Appian omits. Appian introduces some ambiguity by describing the west as “the setting sun,” (πρὸς ἥλιον ἀνίσχοντα). Appian also separates the advice not to enter the city from the advice on how to enter the city, which he describes as “the second prophecy” (τοῦ δευτέρου μαντεύματος). Alexander again met difficult terrain, but Appian does not ascribe the event to a divinity. Instead, he depicts Alexander as mocking (ἐπιτωθᾶσαι) Babylonian prophecy.

These three accounts agree closely. This agreement derives, in part, from Appian's reliance on Arrian. However, the relation of astrological omens to cardinal directions seemingly reflects Babylonian practices. Thus, the hypothesis may be advanced that the astrologers proposed that Alexander alter his approach to invert his astrological relationship to Babylon.

12 Coordinates

The relation of elements from eclipse omens to political entities associated with the four cardinal directions forms a central element of Mesopotamian lunar eclipse omens.⁵² If a lunar eclipse generally signified that a king was to die, these variables indicated to Mesopotamian astrologers which king would die and with which cardinal direction his conqueror would be associated. Thus, the lunar disk was divided into four quadrants. The astrologers associated these quadrants with four kingdoms linked by tradition to the cardinal directions.⁵³ Akkad occupied the south. Subartu or Gutu stood to the north. Elam lay toward the

51 D.S. XVII 112.4, Arr. *An.* VII 16.5–7, App. *BC* II 153; Just. XII 13; Plu. *Alex.* 73.5 reports that he delayed outside the city walls.

52 ROCHBERG, *Aspects* (n. 30), 51–55.

53 For the multiple schemata of association, see ROCHBERG, *Aspects* (n. 30), 53–54. Obviously, the geographical locations of the surrounding kingdoms remained constant.

east and Amurru to the west. The astronomers carefully noted which quadrant suffered the impact (SAR, *šurrú*) and clearing (ZALÁG, *namāru*) of a lunar eclipse. Oddly, astronomers seem not to have considered the directions of impact and clearing in solar eclipses. In addition to the quadrants of impact and clearing, astronomers noted the direction of the winds during lunar eclipses, and astrologers derived omens from these details.

13 Astrological Strategies

By altering the direction of his approach, Alexander may have changed the relationship between himself and the city of Babylon. If the Eclipse Omen Hypothesis is accepted, the manipulation of cardinal directions suggests that Babylonian Omen Episode probably refers to the lunar eclipse predicted for 28 April 323 BC, rather than the solar eclipse predicted for 12 April 323 BC. However, this conclusion depends on the faulty record of preservation and the current state of publication. Because several different schemata paired the lunar quadrants with different directions, reconstructing a hypothetical omen is a hopeless endeavor. Alexander, returning to Babylon from India, might risk identification with Elam, historically the eastern neighbor of Babylon. By circling around the city to approach from the west, heading toward the east, Alexander might align himself with Amurru, the traditional western power. Alexander, however, may have presented some difficulty for the astrologers because of his titles. From his first appearance in the *Astronomical Diaries*, Alexander is not named as a king of one of the commonly mentioned countries, but rather the “king of the world” (LUGAL ŠÚ).⁵⁴ The astrologers had an easy remedy. They could have redirected Alexander’s approach to fit an apodosis for which the protasis represented an astronomical impossibility: an eclipse beginning at the western edge of the moon. Despite their astronomical unfeasibility, such omens appear in the *Enūma Anu Enlil*.⁵⁵

As outlined above, modern reconstructions of Babylonian omens have little historical value. All that can be stated unequivocally is that the advice to exchange the cardinal directions of the approach conforms with the Babylonian practice of interpreting eclipse omens, if not with any eclipse omen in particular. Alternately, some historians have focused on the advice in Appian’s account that Alexander not look at the setting sun.⁵⁶ This interpretation fails to acknowledge Appian’s dependence on Arrian and ascribes a degree of causation to the omen which is better suited to the *Apotelesmatika* of Ptolemy than to the *Enūma Anu Enlil*. Equally possible, the Babylonian diviners felt that Alexander’s entry through the King’s Gate to the west would be more auspicious than an entry through the Ishtar Gate in the east.⁵⁷

14 Conclusions

Because the surviving accounts of Alexander’s return to Babylon from India were composed at least two-hundred and fifty years after his death, a high degree of *post-factum*

54 SACHS and HUNGER, *Astrological* (n. 28), No. -330, ln. 15’.

55 *Enūma Anu Enlil* XV 1.3–4, 2.3, 3.3, 4.3, and 5.1–4. For an edition of the text, see ROCHBERG, *Aspects* (n. 30), 67–74; for a discussion of the astronomical impossibility of a western impact or an eastern clearing, see 52. Other astronomical impossibilities also occur as protases. For the case of days of lunar months on which eclipses could not occur, see 26.

56 SMELIK, “Omina” (n. 43), 94 and VAN DER SPEK, “Darius” (n. 1), 334–335.

57 VAN DER SPEK, “Darius” (n. 1), 334–335.

mythologizing may color these reports. The accounts do not agree exactly, and some authors exhibit a tendency to edit the reports to fit their narrative. Nonetheless, several conclusions seem plausible. First, the name Belephantes cannot be entirely excluded as a phonetic rendering. However, the case for such is not strong. More plausibly, the word Belephantes originated as a title and was used as a personal name. Secondly, Alexander likely received an astrological warning. The advice which he received suggests that the warning contained the astronomical possibility of a lunar eclipse and apodoses drawn from planetary phenomena. If the Eclipse Omen Hypothesis is accepted, the Babylonian Omen Episode probably refers to the lunar eclipse on 28 April 323 BC and an observed planetary omen which indicated he would “rebuild the temples of the great gods.” In the case of the possible eclipse, Alexander presumably did not receive an astrological prediction because no astronomical observation had been made. Alexander may have received advice intended to confound the message of any potential eclipse.

The Babylonian Omen Incident likely seemed different to Babylonians and Greeks. To the Babylonian astrologers, an eclipse was predicted and preparations were made. These preparations probably included the suggestion that Alexander alter his route but would likely not yet have extended to a Substitute King Ritual. When the predicted eclipse did not occur, no astrological prediction would have been forwarded to Alexander. Possibly, Alexander delayed outside the city or spent time in an abortive change of approach until the eclipse possibility had passed. To the Greeks who were returning with Alexander and who were unaccustomed to the mechanics of Babylonian astral omens, the preparations may have resembled a prediction for which Alexander took precautions. After Alexander died, fear that the precautions were erroneously conducted may have arisen. By the time the story was synthesized by Greek historians, the ominous aspect of the information overwhelmed the foreign details.

Alexander and Babylon: A Substitute King?

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In autumn 324 Alexander returned towards Babylon, the scene of his last months until his death in June 323. His time in the city refutes those modern scholars who see him only as a sort of shooting-star, a conqueror who planned to make no lasting difference within pre-existing Achaemenid structures, someone who left, we are asked to believe, the business of “negotiating power” with the subject peoples to his more adept Successors. In Babylon, these successors were the Seleucids. In fact their approach was modelled on what they had seen done by Alexander himself.¹

In less than a year Alexander ordered big, significant changes to the city he had taken from the Achaemenids. The most significant went back to his victorious entry in October, 331. Then, as contemporaries with him stated and Arrian later summarised, he had ordered the city’s big ziggurat, Etemenanki, to be built up again.² Modern attempts to dismiss this eye-witness testimony are wholly unconvincing.³ Eyewitnesses with Alexander said that Xerxes had wrecked it and also that he had destroyed “other shrines” in the city too. As Alexander’s campaign was explicitly claiming to avenge the “sacrileges of Xerxes”, Greeks with Alexander might possibly have ascribed all the visible damage to this one Persian king, though other subsequent kings might perhaps have contributed to it. However, there is nothing in the non-Greek record of Xerxes’s reign to contradict the clear statements by eye-witnesses in Babylon with Alexander and there is non-Greek evidence to support Persian ravaging of the ziggurat itself. Nebuchadnezzar’s foundation-cylinder for his rebuild of the tower was taken off to Persian-ruled Susa.⁴

This temple-damage, a “ground zero” in the heart of Persian-ruled Babylon, was not only observed by Alexander and his contemporaries in 331. When Alexander returned in

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- 1 R. LANE FOX, “The First Hellenistic Man”, in: A. Erskine and L. Llewellyn-Jones (eds.), *Creating A Hellenistic World*, Swansea 2011, 1–30.
 - 2 Arr. *An.* III 16.4.
 - 3 A. KUHRT and S. SHERWIN-WHITE, “Xerxes’ Destruction of Babylonian Temples”, in: H. Sancisi-Weerdenburg and A. Kuhrt (eds.), *Achaemenid History*, II: *The Greek Sources*, Leiden 1987, 69–78, esp. 78 and A. KUHRT, “Alexander in Babylon”, in: H. Sancisi-Weerdenburg and J.W. Drijvers (eds.), *Achaemenid History*, V, Leiden 1990, 121–130 reject the eye-witness accounts of Alexander’s officers and are quite unconvincing. A. GEORGE, “The Tower of Babel: Archaeology, History and Cuneiform Texts”, *AOF* 51 (2005), 75–95 is a judicious survey of the evidence.
 - 4 C. WAERZEGGERS, “The Babylonian revolts against Xerxes and the ‘end of archives’”, *AOF* 50 (2003–4), 150–178 finds space for a Babylonian rebellion in 484 BC and surveys evidence for other years; A. GEORGE, “Xerxes and the Tower of Babel”, in: J. Curtis and St.J. Simpson (eds.), *The World of Achaemenid Persia: History, Art, Society in Iran and the Ancient Near East*, London 2010, 472–486 cites the cylinder at Susa and, decisively, much else. H. SCHMIDT, *Der Tempelturm Etemenanki in Babylon*, Mainz am Rhein 1995 is a magisterial survey by the recent excavator, documenting the big hole in the staircase, patently left by Xerxes.

324–3, he found the big ziggurat still in ruins, despite his orders to build it up seven years earlier. Some of the priests had continued to profit from the unbuilt area, or so we are told by Arrian, drawing on a source with Alexander at the time, almost certainly Ptolemy. These priests, he said, had not wished to start the work and so it had to be ordered all over again.⁵

Quite apart from the order to build up the ziggurat, Alexander's impact on the city was dynamic. It had become the site of a new mint. This mint's issues of new coin in his final years were enormous, as die-studies of it have indicated.⁶ Alexander was not considering Babylon to be his sole "capital", but he certainly regarded it as crucial in his new plans for conquest, down into Arabia and, surely, beyond.⁷ He had ordered the building of a harbour for a massive fleet, something no Achaemenid king had ever contemplated.⁸ He was also envisaging it as the site of Hephaestion's funerary rites. In order to accommodate his funerary memorial, he is said to have ordered a huge length of the city's walls to be breached, as much as ten stades, so Diodorus claims.⁹ On all details of Hephaestion's funerary honours, we must allow for possible slander and exaggeration by the malicious contemporary Ehippus who wrote a text called, revealingly, 'On the Deaths of Hephaestion and Alexander'. This text was certainly not the same as another controversial text, the so-called Royal Diaries, but it is likely to have infected later histories of Alexander's responses to Hephaestion's death and the approach of his own demise. William Tarn well called Ehippus a "scurilous pasquinader".¹⁰ The claim, recently re-asserted, that we can actually trace the remains of Hephaestion's funerary pyre on an area of ground within Babylon's city plan cannot be taken as fact. When first advanced it was promptly answered by Schmitt in the 1940's.¹¹ However, the core of Diodorus's detailed description of the monument's design, several storeys high, surely goes back to an informed Greek source.¹²

When Alexander approached the city, a delegation of priests had met him and warned him to enter only from one side of the city. Their leader is called Belephantes by Diodorus and is said to have talked to Alexander's friend Nearchus.¹³ By 316–315 Nearchus had written a history, which is used elsewhere for evidence about Alexander by the source whom Diodorus is abbreviating, surely Cleitarchus. Nearchus is probably Diodorus's ultimate source for this Babylonian delegation but he is not giving an exactly-transliterated Babylonian name for its leader. We should not follow the ingenious recent suggestion by

5 Arr. *An.* VII 17.1–4 and D.S. XVII 112.3 are main Greek sources.

6 G. LE RIDER, *Alexandre le Grand: monnaie, finances et politique*, Paris 2003, 299–319, esp. 300 and 318–319.

7 F. SCHACHERMEYR, *Alexander in Babylon und die Reichsordnung nach seinem Tode*, Vienna 1970, 74–77 on Str. XV 3.10, missed by R. J. VAN DER SPEK, "The Babylonian City", in: A. Kuhrt and S. Sherwin-White (eds.), *Hellenism in the East: The Interaction of Greek and non-Greek Civilizations from Syria to Central Asia after Alexander*, London 1987, 65.

8 Arr. *An.* VII 19.4.

9 D.S. XVII 115.

10 Ehipp. *FGrH* 126 F 1–5; I do not believe A. CHUGG, "The Journal of Alexander the Great", *AHB* 19 (2005) 155–175; W. W. TARN, *Alexander The Great*, II, Cambridge 1948, 354 n. 2.

11 O. PALAGIA, "Hephaestion's Pyre and the Royal Hunt of Alexander", in: A. B. Bosworth and E. J. Baynham (eds.), *Alexander the Great in Fact and Fiction*, Oxford 2000, 167–206; E. SCHMIDT, "Die Griechen in Babylon und das Weiterleben ihrer Kultur", *AA* 56 (1941), 786–841.

12 P. MCKECHNIE, "Diodorus Siculus and Hephaestion's Pyre", *CQ* 45 (1995), 418–432.

13 D.S. XVII 112.3.

Van der Spek that this “Belephantes” is none other than Bel-apla-iddin, the Babylonian who wrote entries for the astronomical diary in the months from April to September, 322. Van der Spek also ingeniously proposes that the “prophecy” which the delegates gave to Alexander included the Babylonian text which we now know as the Dynastic Prophecy and that this text had predicted that the victor in the battle at Gaugamela would live and reign only for another 8 years, until the year 323.¹⁴ The Dynastic Prophecy is preserved only in fragments and is notoriously difficult to interpret, let alone to associate with Alexander before his death. In the Greek tradition it was believed that the Chaldaeans had indeed predicted Alexander’s imminent death but that this prediction was based on the positions of the stars, nothing more. According to Diodorus, and probably Nearchus, they also told Alexander that he must not enter the city and that he could escape his danger if he rebuilt the “tomb of Belus”, which had been “destroyed by the Persians”.¹⁵ This tomb is the ziggurat, another testimony, perhaps by Nearchus, that it had been wrecked under Persian rule. Diodorus? Nearchus says nothing about a prophecy based on the years since Gaugamela. I prefer the Greek evidence which is all we have and is possibly derived from an eyewitness rather than Van der Spek’s bold conjectures.

How did Alexander behave in the city after entering it? In 1992, Bosworth proposed that in spring 323 Alexander actually appointed a sub-king, Arrhidaeus the future Philip III, to rule under him in Babylon.¹⁶ This unprecedented suggestion was made in order to cope with the notorious problem of Philip’s regnal years as set out in the cuneiform Chronicle of the Successors and to resist their implications for a “high” chronology of the first four years after Alexander’s death. By starting Philip’s regnal years in Alexander’s lifetime, Bosworth hoped to reconcile this Chronicle’s numbering of these years with his preferred high chronology for the years which followed. The attempt fails, as cuneiform scholars have promptly shown.¹⁷ Furthermore, nothing in our Greek and Latin sources, not even (as Bosworth claimed) in Curtius, points to such a subcontracting of royal power by Alexander.¹⁸ It would be a most startling sign of “Babylonisation” by him in his last months.

Nonetheless, such signs have been detected in another episode with royal implications. Even if Alexander did not appoint a sub-king, may he not have been given a “substitute king” by anxious Babylonian priests and attendants? The notion was first suggested by Theo Jacobsen in 1957, on the strength of a curious incident, variously reported, for which our sources are all Greek, Arrian (citing Aristobulus), Plutarch’s *Life of Alexander* and Diodorus Book XVII.¹⁹

14 R. VAN DER SPEK, “Darius III, Alexander the Great and Babylonian Scholarship”, in: W. Henkelman and A. Kuhrt (eds.), *A Persian Perspective: Essays In Memory of Heleen Sancisi-Weerdenburg, Achaemenid History*, XIII, Leiden 2003, 289–346; A. KUHRT, *The Persian Empire*, Abingdon 2007, 462–463 wisely concludes her translation of the Dynastic Prophecy: “all suggestions are speculative and understanding of the text remains moot.”

15 D.S. XVII 112.2.

16 A.B. BOSWORTH, “Philip III Arrhidaeus and the Chronology of the Successors”, *Chiron* 21 (1992), 55–81.

17 T. BOIY, *Between High and Low: A Chronology of the Early Hellenistic Period*, Frankfurt am Main 2007, 111–115.

18 Curt. X 7.2.

19 T. JACOBSEN, “Early Political Development in Mesopotamia”, *ZA* 52 (1957), 91–140, at 139 n. 115. Arr. *An.* VII 24.1–3, Plu. *Alex.* 73.7–9, D.S. XVII 116.1–4. A. ABRAMENKO, “Der Fremde auf dem

In brief outline, based first on what all the sources agree, we are told that an obscure male made his way through Alexander's court attendants and sat on Alexander's throne in his absence. Onlookers lamented at the sight and considered it a bad omen. Alexander interrogated the man and even had him tortured (according to the contemporary Aristobulus). According to Plutarch and Diodorus, Alexander had him put to death. The suggestion, since Jacobsen, is that behind these various Greek descriptions of the event, we are actually seeing the attempted imposition of a "substitute king", as known in earlier non-Greek evidence.

Substitute kings are solidly attested in Babylonian, Hittite and above all Assyrian sources and the evidence to date has been surveyed most usefully by Irene Huber in an important article in 2005.²⁰ We know most about such royal substitutions in Assyrian sources, whose evidence was well set out by Simo Parpola in 1983.²¹ They even allege that way back in c. 1800 BC, one such substitute who had taken the throne was a gardener. This story gladdens my horticultural heart, but it is clearly a legend, one which has later analogies, including the heart-warming tale of an Oriental "gardener-turned-king" in the sixth century AD historian Agathias, citing earlier Hellenistic Greek sources.²² The most solid evidence clusters in the reign of King Esarhaddon, when "substitute kings" are indeed attested by contemporary letters and documents. Substitute kings took Esarhaddon's royal place in organized rituals, evidently to avert misfortune away from the king himself. In the words of Stanley Hooke the substitute was chosen to serve as a "potential lightning-conductor".²³ Here, I would add that Esarhaddon has been widely, perhaps correctly, believed to have murdered his predecessor Sennacherib.²⁴ Historians of Alexander have yet to fasten on this analogy. In all his studies of Alexander and his increasing "loneliness of power", Professor Badian never addressed the notion that Alexander might have caused a substitute king to be brought forward at the end of his life. It could have been made into a dramatic pendent to his claim that in 336 BC, Alexander had had his father and predecessor Philip murdered. In Alexander's last months Badian, at least, could have argued that some old birds were coming home to roost, besetting him with guilt and evil omens.

Thron. Die letzte Verschwörung gegen Alexander d. Gr.", *Klio* 82 (2000), 362–378 is a recent detailed attempt to interpret the classical sources.

- 20 I. HUBER, "Ersatzkönige in griechischem Gewand: Die Unformung der sarpuhi-Rituale bei Herodot, Berossos, Agathias und der Alexander Historikern", in: R. Rollinger (Hg.), *Von Sumer bis Homer. Festschrift für Manfred Schretter zum 60. Geburtstag am 25 Februar 2004*, Münster 2005, 339–397. I am grateful to R. Rollinger for alerting me to this invaluable survey of the Near Eastern evidence, whose bibliography I presuppose in what follows. I merely differ from her in the interpretation of the Alexander historians and Herodotus, so I express these disagreements in what follows.
- 21 S. PARPOLA, "Excursus: The Substitute King Ritual", in: S. PARPOLA, *Letters From Assyrian Scholars to the Kings Esarhaddon and Assurbanipal*, Part 2: *Commentary and Appendices*, Neukirchen-Vluyn 1983, xxii ff. For classicists, K.A.D. SMELIK, "The Omina Mortis in the Historians of Alexander The Great: Alexander's Attitude Towards The Babylonian Priesthood", *Talanta* 10–11 (1978–9), 92–111 is still useful.
- 22 A.K. GRAYSON, *Assyrian and Babylonian Chronicles*, Locust Valley 1975, 45 ff. and 154 ff.; HUBER, "Ersatzkönige" (n. 20), 383–6, with much bibliography; Agath. II 25.4–6 citing Alexander Polyhistor (author of a *Chaldaica*) and Bion.
- 23 S. H. HOOKE, "The Theory and Practice of Substitution", *VT* 2 (1952), 2–17, at 4.
- 24 A.K. GRAYSON, "Assyria: Sennacherib and Esarhaddon", *Cambridge Ancient History* III², Cambridge 1991, 119–121.

The Assyrian evidence is certainly evidence of a substitution ceremony, but it attests something much more elaborate than the Alexander sources report in 323 BC. Its ceremony was initiated after astronomical omens, usually eclipses. It involved the Court-exorcist and had to be agreed in advance with the king. He then stood aside and allowed a substitute to rule in an agreed fashion and even to take on a substitute queen beside him. Both the substitute and his queen were insignificant people, prisoners of war being attested. Huber even infers that a substitute was expected to be silent while sitting on the throne.²⁵ He ruled for a while, up to 100 days being attested, and his installation was accompanied by days of elaborate feasting and ceremonies. As many as 600 attendants could be involved. At the end of his “reign”, however, when the evil omens had been lightning-conducted onto his person, he and his queen were put to death. The real king then resumed his rule.²⁶

Huber’s excellent survey runs together evidence from a range of periods and from Hittite, Babylonian and Assyrian sources, as if to present a single “Ersatzkönigsritual”. On any one occasion the reality may have varied and we should be wary about running all our sources from different dates and cultures together to give one template for “the” ceremony. For Alexander historians the question is whether this sort of ceremony was known still in the Persian era. From a near eastern perspective, scholars have tended to assume it was. They see it underlying a famous episode in Herodotus involving Xerxes and Artabanus, the latter having to wear Xerxes’s royal robes and sleep in his bed to discover if he, too, will be visited by the same dream as Xerxes.²⁷ This episode, in my view, has nothing whatsoever to do with the substitute king ceremony and alludes to it at no point. Herodotus’s narrative has been wrongly re-classified by scholars who have been approaching it from their Mesopotamian studies of “substitutes”. Its roots are quite different.

For substitute rituals in the Persian era, the two most relevant sources in Greek are Berossus and Dio Chrysostom, writing c. AD 100. There is no evidence as yet for a substitute-king ritual in any non-Greek source from the Achaemenid era. Dio Chrysostom is the more relevant of the two.²⁸ At an occasion which he calls the Sacaea festival, he says that one of the prisoners who have been condemned to death is taken and made to sit for some days on the king’s throne. He is given the royal dress and allowed to give orders, drink, live luxuriously and enjoy the king’s concubines. “Nobody stops him from doing whatever he wants.” Then, his royal clothes are taken off, he is whipped and hanged. Dio gives this information not in his own person but in an invented speech for Diogenes who is “delivering” it to Alexander and warning him in advance about the perils of becoming a Persian king. His Diogenes particularly stresses the participant’s stupidity and ignorance, but this detail should not be treated as a historical fact. It is only part of Dio’s moralizing rhetoric, suited to his invented Diogenes.

25 HUBER, “Ersatzkönige” (n. 20), 342–356, esp. 348 on the possible need for silence; J. BOTTERO, “Le substitut royal et son sort en Mésopotamie ancienne”, in: J. BOTTERO, *Mésopotamie: L’écriture, la raison et les dieux*, Paris 1967, 170–190.

26 HUBER, “Ersatzkönige” (n. 20), 347–351; R. LABAT, *La caractère religieuse de la royauté assyro-babylonienne*, Paris 1939, 98–110.

27 Hdt. VII 12–18, with HUBER, “Ersatzkönige” (n. 20), 357–362 and a full bibliography on the subject.

28 D.Chr. 4.66–68; J. L. MOLES, “The Date and Purpose of the Fourth Kingship Oration of Dio Chrysostom”, *ClAnt* 2 (1983), 251–278, on a far from simple text.

Dio sets this ceremony at the Sacaea festival. Ctesias, who knew Babylon, and Berossus, who later used Babylonian records, both referred to the Sacaea, but their accounts of it are not quite Dio's. It lasted for five days, Berossus tell us, and slaves in households in Babylon would reverse roles with their masters and rule over them. In each household a slave would be led out of the house wearing dress "similar to the royal dress". He was called "zoganes". If Berossus is correct, this festival included a classic ritual of inversion and reversal, one of many which Henk Versnel and others have studied.²⁹ However, the ritual is not connected to the king nor to his throne nor well-being. It is a household-ceremony and it does not conform to the Assyrian substitute ritual at all. The well-informed Berossus places the Sacaea festival in the month of Loos, August to September.³⁰ This occasion cannot, therefore, be the occasion underlying the event on Alexander's throne, because that event occurred in May.

Berossus's Sacaea festival does not resemble Dio's. Perhaps we should explain the Greek word "Sacaea" as a mistranslation of a Mesopotamian word with a more general meaning (the Assyrian word "sakku" has been suggested, which can mean mad or crazy).³¹ There might, then, have been two different "crazy-festivals" in the year, one royal, one for households. Or we can detach what Dio describes from the Sacaea festival and assume that it belonged on another occasion. Dio himself had no original knowledge about the Achaemenid kings whatsoever and at best, we must credit him with using a better-placed Greek source of earlier date, Ctesias being an obvious possibility. Even then, he is describing a regular event at a yearly festival, not one related to the occasional appearance of an eclipse or a bad omen. His details can indeed be matched with details of the Assyrian substitute-ceremonies, but he does not know all of the ceremony or put the details in the right context. However, Dio is only Dio and it is enough that he knows so much through some earlier source. It would only be known to a Greek source through information from the Achaemenid Persian period. Huber has now explained Dio's evidence away as modelled on the Alexander historians, but here she is wrong.³² The details in Dio are not those which any of the Alexander-historians relate. Their interloper on the royal throne does not expect to sit on it for days, to enjoy the concubines and then and only then be put to death.

Dio, or rather his unnamed source, is evidence for something different, that knowledge of a full-blown "substitution ceremony" had survived the end of the Assyrian era and lived on into the Persian era, to be picked up by a Greek source. Such a ceremony happens to re-emerge in sixteenth century Persia, but it is not clear that it was then based on genuine, surviving historical knowledge.³³ Neither Dio nor Ctesias was being read in Iran. The ritual's reappearance may be a coincidence, not evidence for some long oral tradition of ancient Persian ritual.

29 Beros. *FGrH* 680 F 2; Ctes. *FGrH* 688 F 41; S. LANGDON, "The Babylonian and Persian Sacaea", *JRAS* 18 (1924), 65–72; HUBER, "Ersatzkönige" (n. 20) 362–368; H. S. VERSNEL, *Transition and Reversal in Myth and Ritual*, Leiden 1993, 115–122.

30 Beros. *FGrH* 680 F 2.

31 HUBER, "Ersatzkönige" (n. 20), 364 n. 70; she also discusses Str. XI 8.4–5, which is relevant to the Sacaea but not to my topic here.

32 HUBER, "Ersatzkönige" (n. 20), 365 and n. 75.

33 J. MALCOLM, *History of Persia*, I, London 1829, 346 on the substitution for Shah Abbas in 1591; PARPOLA, "Excursus" (n. 21), xxxi cites this.

Even the most cursory reading of our Greek sources shows that they are not describing a ceremony as Dio describes one. Nor are they describing a formally-agreed royal substitution ceremony or a ceremony with the scale and range of the Assyrian historical examples. When closely read, what do they represent? Here, it is important to realize the nature and problems of the respective sources, as near Eastern historians are prone to dismiss them all as inventions or as of equally low status. The discussion requires detail, because it is the detail which shapes each account and which points to very important differences between them. Arrian cites Aristobulus as his only source. Aristobulus finished his history after 301 BC but he had certainly been a contemporary at Alexander's court, one who is rightly trusted for other incidents which he sets in Babylonia in 324-3 and for his judgements on Alexander's motivations at that time.³⁴ He had been deputed to see to the restoration of the ruined tomb of Cyrus back at Pasargadae in winter 325-4, but enough time had passed for him to be back in Alexander's entourage.³⁵ He tells the story of the throne as one of several other ominous signs, clustered in the final months at Babylon, one of which, the researches of the diviner Peithagoras into the state of an animal's liver, is trusted both for its personal detail and its narrated content by all modern historians.³⁶ It is quite wrong, then, to detach all our Alexander-sources from any witnessed knowledge of what happened in the episode of the "man on Alexander's throne".³⁷

Our other two sources, Plutarch and Diodorus, are not using Aristobulus. They are more closely interrelated, but Plutarch, as we shall see, is not using a source who wrote before c. 300 BC. Diodorus is ultimately using Cleitarchus, widely regarded as unreliable in antiquity, and although his date has recently returned to scholarly debate, it is still right, I believe, to put him c. 310 BC.³⁸ He or Diodorus has told of the incident in the wrong sequence, after, not before, Alexander's trip by boat down the Euphrates.³⁹ Other alleged details may well be fictitious elaboration.

We must start with Aristobulus, as he was a contemporary at court.⁴⁰ According to him, Alexander was attending to the new arrivals for his army. He became thirsty: and went away: presumably he went away to have a drink. He was therefore absent when one of the "unregarded", insignificant people pushed through the eunuchs around Alexander's throne and sat on it. "Some say" that he was a prisoner under open arrest: possibly Aristobulus himself remarked on this variant, rather than it being one picked up by Arrian from his wider reading, but Aristobulus himself did not believe it. Aristobulus is precise about the setting. On either side of the throne were silver-footed couches on which Alexander's Companions used to sit. The Companions had gone away with Alexander for a break.

34 L. PEARSON, *The Lost Histories of Alexander the Great*, New York/Oxford 1960, 180–187.

35 Arr. *An.* VI 29.10.

36 Arr. *An.* VII 18; Plu. *Alex.* 73.3–5.

37 HUBER, "Ersatzkönige" (n. 20), 378–380 and esp. 389 inclines to this view.

38 I do not accept the apparent implications of P. Oxy. 4808, suggesting a later date c. 250–220 BC nor the arguments for one c. 260–250 BC in V. PARKER, "Source-Critical Reflections on Cleitarchus's Work", in: P. Wheatley and R. Hannah (eds.), *Alexander and his Successors: Essays From The Antipodes*, Claremont 2009, 28–55. P. SCHNABEL, *Berosos und die hellenistische Literatur*, Leipzig 1923, 45–46 argues well that Cleitarchus was not at Babylon in 324–3 BC.

39 D.S. XVII 116.2–7, corrected by Arr. *An.* VII 21–22 and 24.1–3.

40 Aristobul. ap. Arr. *An.* VII 24.1–4.

These silver couches for Companions at court are attested in other contemporary evidence.⁴¹ When the eunuchs saw the interloper, they did not try to remove him, “in accordance, it seems, with some Persian custom”. This explanation is probably Aristobulus’s, but might only be Arrian’s insertion and the custom may not have been specifically “Persian”, except to a Greek outsider’s eye, Babylonian being equally possible. The scene does not seem to be set inside a palace in an enclosed room: Alexander is attending to the enrolment of newly-arrived troops, a job most readily done in an open space in the open air. The throne is not guarded by any of his high-ranking Bodyguards or armed men. Probably the adjoining Companions sufficed. The presence of “eunuchs”, in the plural, is particularly interesting: did they include Alexander’s beloved Bagoas and what were their origins, Persian, Babylonian or both? At no other time are we told of “eunuchs” gathered around Alexander’s throne. Perhaps they are emphasised here because of the emotional reaction which followed, befitting “womanish” men. They “tore their robes and beat their faces and breasts” and lamented “as if at great evil”. Alexander had the man tortured to find out if a plot was involved, but he said that “it had just come into his mind to do what he did.” The prophets then considered that the event had befallen Alexander “even more for no good omen.”

This narrative has several important aspects. Aristobulus does not describe the interloper as a prisoner. There is no problem about an escape, somehow, from his bonds. Alexander had not taken his clothes off when he went away and therefore the interloper did not wear the king’s clothes or diadem. Alexander is not said to have killed the man. This variant is not an attempt to exculpate Alexander of cruelty, as some suggest, because Aristobulus remarks explicitly that Alexander had the man tortured.⁴² There is no attempt to minimize the event’s significance: it is explicitly described by Aristobulus as being declared by attendant seers to be a very bad omen. Above all, Alexander does nothing to avert the omen they diagnose. It is one of many such omens, beginning with the Chaldeans’ warning not to enter Babylon from an ill-omened aspect. Aristobulus was clearly concerned about this warning given in late 324, evidently believing it to be well founded. Alexander, he even claimed, had tried to obey it but had been hindered by marshy terrain on his route.⁴³ Even before the throne episode, evil omens have been piling up in Aristobulus’s account. He is presenting Alexander’s death as fated and foreseen in advance by the gods. Perhaps this “inevitability” was an answer to allegations, rampant by 301 BC when Aristobulus wrote, that Alexander had been poisoned. However, the omens might have been signs that something as evil as a poisoning was going to occur. At least Aristobulus, writing after 301 BC, was presenting Alexander’s death as predicted for some months beforehand. There was nothing “last minute” about the event, he wished to show.

In Diodorus and Plutarch, there are significantly different details. Ultimately, Diodorus is likely here to be using Cleitarchus but Plutarch, I suspect, is using an even later source who has elaborated what Cleitarchus, or the “vulgate”, had said on the matter. Importantly,

41 Ehipp. *FGrH* 126 F 4.

42 Arr. *An.* VII 24.3, against HUBER, “Ersatzkönige” (n. 20), 374 who explains it as “um Alexanders Humanität zu betonen”.

43 Arr. *An.* VII 17.5–6; H.-U. WIEMER, “Alexander in Babylon”, *HZ* (2007), 1–23 for the traditions and the topography.

both Plutarch and Diodorus set up the incident so that Alexander had left his clothes and diadem on the throne. He had gone off to have a massage and Plutarch adds that he was then playing a game of ball with some young ball-boys, presumably still naked. Indeed, we know from contemporary inscriptions, Alexander did have favourite ball-boys and evidently played such games.⁴⁴ According to Diodorus, one of the “local people”, who had been kept in bonds, was “automatically” loosed from his fetters and passed through the “doors” of the court, eluding the “guards”. The scene-setting here is different to Aristobulus’s silver couches and group of eunuchs and so is the protagonist. It is not at all clear how such an interloper could have passed “unhindered” through the door-guards without some further “divine” assistance. He approached the throne, put on the royal dress and diadem and sat on it. He then “kept quiet”. Alexander was “struck with alarm at this paradoxical event”. He went up to the man and asked him quietly who he was and what he was intending. The widely-used English Loeb edition by C. B. Welles then mistranslates, as if “the man made no reply whatsoever.” The Greek actually means “he said that he was thinking of absolutely nothing at all”, an important comment which is close to one in Arrian.⁴⁵ Alexander referred the “sign” to the diviners. As they judged, he put the man to death, “so that the trouble signified should pass onto him”, the interloper. He gathered up the clothing and made a sacrifice to the “apotropaic gods”, presumably gods in his Greek tradition.⁴⁶ He “had been” thrown into great distress.

Like Aristobulus, Diodorus and his source relate the incident to a whole cluster of warning omens. They enhance the divine and the miraculous in their story. They make the interloper wear the royal dress and diadem. They have him put to death so as to divert the trouble, an unusual example of “scapegoat thinking” as late as the 320’s BC. Huber compares the scapegoat-rituals at the Thargelia festival in Greek cities, including Athens, but the evidence for these actual practices relates to an archaic past in almost every case and the scapegoat was driven out of the city, not put to death at once.⁴⁷ It is likely that Diodorus’s source imagined the diviners concerned to be non-Greeks, giving such advice.

Diodorus relates the incident to the previous warnings to Alexander about not entering the city. Like Aristobulus, he sees it as one more forewarning from the gods, but he also links it to a supposed rejection of the Babylonian priests’ earlier warning by “philosophers around Anaxarchus” whom Alexander had followed but now “blamed thoroughly”, being convinced by this new warning of trouble that the Babylonians’ earlier warnings were true. This criticism of Greek philosophers, not Chaldaean astronomers, reads like later polemic, such as gathered round the likes of Anaxarchus in anecdotes.⁴⁸ It is most unlikely to have been true in 323 BC.

Plutarch’s account is similar in most respects.⁴⁹ He too has the royal robes available to be worn during Alexander’s absence for a massage and a game of ball. His young ball-boys

44 Plu. *Alex.* 39.5.

45 D.S. XVII 116.4 with Arr. *An.* VII 24.3.

46 D.S. XVII 116.4; HUBER, “Ersatzkönige” (n. 20), 378 and 374 n. 100 misunderstands the Greek as a “Vernichtung des Gewandes des Substituts”, paralleling her evidence on 352–353 and n. 38.

47 HUBER, “Ersatzkönige” (n. 20), 368, with R. PARKER, *Polytheism and Society at Athens*, Oxford 2005, 482–483 and J.N. BREMMER, “Scapegoat Rituals in Ancient Greece”, *HSPH* 87 (1983), 299–320.

48 H. BERVE, *Das Alexanderreich auf prosopographischer Grundlage*, II, Munich 1926, nos. 70, 33–35.

49 Plu. *Alex.* 73.7–9.

notice the man on the throne when it is time to get dressed again. Neither Diodorus nor Plutarch represents Alexander as being far away from the scene. Plutarch, too, stresses the man's silence, even when questioned. Eventually, the man "comes back to his senses". Plutarch and his source represent him as being in a daze, a divinely induced one as will emerge. Plutarch gives the man a name: Dionysius of Messene. He had been brought up "from the seacoast", bound in bonds "on some charge or other". He said that the god Serapis had "just recently stood beside him", in a vision or dream therefore, had loosed his bonds, brought him here and ordered him to wear the robe and diadem and keep silent. Alexander then "put the man out of the way", killing him as the diviners ordered. He himself was very perturbed.

Like Aristobulus-Arrian and Diodorus-Cleitarchus, Plutarch links the episode to a whole cluster of evil omens. Whereas Diodorus simply says the man was freed of his bonds "automatically", Plutarch gives him a name and ascribes his release and his actions to the specific god, Serapis. Both points are problematic. The name "Dionysius" is not a strong theophoric name, closely relating the man to the god Dionysus. It is a common Greek personal name in its own right, but Dionysus was indeed the god most famous for breaking his imprisoning bonds. Two manuscripts, of very low independent authority, present the man as a "Mesenian", as if from Mesene on the Persian Gulf, not as a "Messenian" (the reading of the majority of authoritative manuscripts) from faraway Messenia in the Greek Peloponnese. As Diodorus calls the man one of the "local people", the poorly attested reading "Mesenian" has even found scholarly support.⁵⁰ However, he had been brought "from the seacoast", a phrase which refers to the Aegean coast in other uses by Alexander historians.⁵¹ With Plutarch's recent editor, Konrat Ziegler, I reject the variant "Mesenian" as a scribal error. Did Plutarch's source really know the man's name and origin? Perhaps the link with fetters and their breaking led someone to give him the name "Dionysius", echoing Dionysus, and perhaps even the famous association of Messenia with helots and bondsmen in Sparta's power led Messenia to be picked on as a suitable home for this man in bonds. Alternatively, on this one point Plutarch's source preserved the truth, perhaps given in Aristobulus's full account, though omitted in Arrian's abbreviation of it.

Serapis is the bigger problem. Despite scholarly attempts to discover him in the 320's or earlier, the minimalist case set out long ago by P.M. Fraser still stands: cults of the god were a Ptolemaic creation and the mention of a temple of "Serapis" in Babylon in 323 BC in the so-called Royal Diaries is sufficient to damn their claims to be contemporary records of the events there.⁵² Serapis, in his Ptolemaic guise, became a major presence of advice in dreams and visions. His motivating presence in this way in Plutarch's story is evidence of its shaping in the third century BC. Diodorus leaves the divine force involved unnamed, claiming only that the bonds fell off "automatically". In my view, Plutarch's source has

50 Plu. *Alex.* 73.8, with the reading in Mss. P and C and D.S. XVII 116.2 and the full bibliography of this crux in HUBER, "Ersatzkönige" (n. 20), 375 n. 106 and ABRAMENKO, "Fremde" (n. 19), 366. K. ZIEGLER (ed.), *Plutarchi Vitae Parallelae*, II.2, Leipzig 1968, vii–viii explains the low value of Mss. P and C.

51 Arr. *An.* VII 24.1 and IV 7.2 and also the phrase "from the sea", the Mediterranean in each case, at III 16.9 and 19.6.

52 P.M. FRASER, "Current problems concerning the early history of the cult of Serapis", *Oath* 7 (1967), 23–45 is still valid.

elaborated the source (probably Cleitarchus) of Diodorus's account by adding in Serapis whom the author knew from his later context and from the so-called Royal Diaries, a text which Diodorus's source (c 310 BC, on the usual view) never used at all, surely because the Diaries did not then exist.⁵³

This level of detailed comparison and criticism is essential, but it may leave Orientalists thinking simply that the Alexander historians are a total concoction of fiction and invention, not to be taken too seriously for episodes such as the "man on the throne". One favoured approach is to postulate that a real substitute-ritual was indeed beginning to take place, but the Greek authors have all misunderstood it and reshaped the episode into a god-driven omen, another "warning" of Alexander's death. Greeks were entirely familiar with such omens of doom and they were particularly interested in these ones because of the keen debate after the event as to whether the Chaldeans, the Babylonian priests and astronomers, had actually predicted Alexander's death correctly in 324–3 and their warnings should have been heeded.

The distortions, ignorance and fictions of "Greek sources" for matters in the Persian empire have had a fashionable run in recent scholarship. However, not all Greek sources are equally uninformed and this phase of blanket disbelief in them, particularly by near Eastern specialists and conferences, is now beginning to be tempered, advisedly.⁵⁴ In the case of the "man on the throne", the approach favoured by scholars such as Pierre Briant and Brian Bosworth (in his forthcoming major commentary on Arrian's concluding books) is that elements of the truth, an intended substitute ritual, can still be detected in the distorted stories of the Greek sources and therefore we can assume that such a ceremony was indeed what was going on before Alexander interrupted it.⁵⁵ Irene Huber has a more nuanced approach, some of which I endorse: there was no actual substitute ceremony going on in May 323, she argues, but our Greek authors, all keen to pile up omens of Alexander's death, invented their stories of the "man on the throne", building them up from items known in old substitution-rituals, though the Greek authors in question did not understand the full picture of such a ritual and simply picked or chose the bits of plausible detail which they wove into their tale of an "omen".⁵⁶

In my view, the episode was one of varying perceptions, not of Greek fiction or Greek misunderstanding. We must restore the scope for contemporary misunderstanding in contexts which involve onlookers from different cultures and language-groups. In the "throne-episode", they include Alexander's non-Greek prophets, some onlooking eunuchs and modern Oriental scholars. The first point is that Aristobulus has an authority far higher than Plutarch's unknown source or Diodorus's amply-attested capacity in book XVII for mud-

53 D.S. XVII 117.1–3 does not use the Diaries, whose detailed evidence is used in Arr. *An.* VII 28 and Plu. *Alex.* 76.

54 T. HARRISON, *Writing Ancient Persia*, London 2011, is an acute and critical examination of the phase of belittling "Greek sources" for Achaemenid Persian topics.

55 P. BRIANT, "Le Roi est Mort, Vive Le Roi", in: J. Kellens (ed.), *La religion iranienne à l'époque achéménide*, Liège 1991, 1–11, esp. 3–4; P. BRIANT, *From Cyrus To Alexander: A History of the Persian Empire*, Winona Lake, 2002, 726 and 783; P. MCKECHNIE, "Omens on the Death of Alexander", in: Wheatley and Hannah (eds.), *Alexander* (n. 38), 206–226 and 210 where he cites the forthcoming view of A. B. BOSWORTH's Arrian commentary.

56 HUBER, "Ersatzkönige" (n. 20) 378–380 and 388–390.

dle, misdating and vulgate invention, compounded by the likes of Cleitarchus. We should compare Aristobulus's account of another recent "omen", in Babylonia, Alexander's loss of his diadem while boating in the marshes and its bringing back to him by somebody else. Later authors claimed the man was Seleucus, eventual winner in the struggles for Alexander's legacy in Babylon. His wearing of the diadem was prophetic.⁵⁷ Conspicuously, Aristobulus does not take this false line, even though he wrote after Seleucus's triumph in 301 BC. He stated that the man involved was simply a Phoenician sailor. Others claimed that Alexander gave the man a big reward but then had him killed on the advice of his diviners, as the wearing of the diadem was a capital matter. Aristobulus says that the man received the talent but was flogged, only. Aristobulus has an apologetic tendency at times, as is well established, but I cannot see it at work here.⁵⁸ Alexander flogs the man, enough of a ferocious penalty. Aristobulus is not defending Alexander's name so much as keeping the ominous element in the event within bounds. It was a bad omen to lose the diadem but there was no significance in the person who wore it and there was no need to put him to death. Aristobulus's version is more sober and has the greater claim to be near to "what actually happened", despite the swirl of rumour and bias which was gathering round it when he eventually wrote.

For similar reasons, his account of the throne incident can stand. There was no obviously "apologetic" reason, for the sake of Alexander's reputation, to deny that the man could have worn the royal robe and diadem or to limit Alexander's action to torture (cruel as it was) rather than execution. Aristobulus may perhaps be casting his story so as to rebut the sort of details we can read in Diodorus's, but his reason for doing so is simply that he believed they were wrong and he, or his informants were in the city at the time, much closer to "what happened" and were near to the truth on each point. What is quite clear is that he is not describing anything remotely resembling a substitution ceremony. Such a ceremony could not be imposed on an ignorant king. Alexander would have to have been a party to it. It involved a long period, feasts, the wearing of royal robes and the eventual execution of the substitute. The substitute had to know exactly what he was doing. Rather, Aristobulus's narrative is one of contrasting perceptions, as ours should be too. The man acts on impulse. The onlooking eunuchs do not remove him, observing "some Persian custom, it seems". The eunuchs' first thought may have been that a substitute was indeed appearing before them, although substitutions in Assyrian evidence seem to have been occasions of joy and celebration, not of grief.⁵⁹ Alexander's concern is simply that a plot may be involved. The diviners see it all as a bad omen, not as a potential aversion of such evil. Modern Orientalists jump to conclusions, like the eunuchs, and assume that an "underlying" substitution ritual is being misunderstood here by the Greek source. In fact there was no such ritual. An interloper was acting on impulse, seeing the throne empty and unguarded. He just thought, why not sit on it?

The distortions in the actual narrative begin with Diodorus-Cleitarchus, perhaps c. 310 BC. The incident is mis-dated and mis-set. The miraculous element has now been intro-

57 Arr. *An.* VII 22.2–5; HUBER, "Ersatzkönige" (n. 20), 373 nn. 78–79 for bibliography.

58 P.A. BRUNT, "Notes On Aristobulus of Cassandria", *CQ* 24 (1974), 65–69. I do not agree with HUBER, "Ersatzkönige" (n. 20) that the flogging is a motif to show Alexander's "Humanität".

59 HUBER, "Ersatzkönige" (n. 20), 376.

duced. The interloper is said to be eerily silent. Diviners, surely non-Greeks, claim that the evil can be diverted onto him if he is killed. So he is put to death. The story has been reshaped into a tale of aversion of evil, ending with Alexander's sacrifice to apotropaic gods. The cue to interpret all this in an aversionary perspective may perhaps have come from some tradition known to the source, surely Cleitarchus. His father Deinon had written on Persian customs and perhaps he had at some point alluded to the role of interlopers on the royal throne as potential "lightning conductors" of doom and evil omen.⁶⁰ They would have been part of the hazy Greek traditions about "substitutes" that also surface, centuries later, in Dio Chrysostom. To make them relevant, the man had to be said to wear the robe and diadem and so Alexander's absence had to be re-styled. Plutarch's source then goes further by attributing the man's divine liberation from bonds and his "purpose" to the later divinity Serapis, filling a gap which the earlier story may have left anonymous.

As this story is one which snowballed, beyond Aristobulus's contemporary knowledge, it is unwise to try to validate it by relating many of its details to this or that item, attested at one or other date in one or other near Eastern tradition. Diodorus's interloper is said to be silent and in Plutarch even to have been ordered to be so by Serapis. It is only Huber's inference from one Assyrian text that substitute kings were perhaps expected to stay silent on the throne. Hittite sources seem to tell of substitutes who were prisoners, but they were prisoners of war, not "under arrest" on a charge, and how ever would Greek writers have known such a long-lost Hittite detail centuries later in Alexander's era?⁶¹ The similarities, such as they were, were over interpreted by onlookers, prophets and eunuchs. We should not make their same mistake.

There is one other important inference. Aristobulus's account is close to the actual event, but it is explicit that Alexander's prompt reaction to the noise and the sight was that the interloper might be part of a plot against him. Aristobulus was generally favourable to Alexander, but in this case he is revealingly explicit. Up in Sogdiana, in 328, Alexander had simply let an innocent intruder onto his throne go free, despite it being a Persian custom that nobody should sit on the king's throne. The weather was an extenuating circumstance and Alexander showed magnanimity.⁶² In Babylon in May 323, he did not. A "plot" was his prompt interpretation of what was happening. Aristobulus does not describe a "plot" as being the interpretation of the Oriental onlookers. So much has been written and debated about Alexander's fear of conspirators and whether it was ever "paranoia". In this case, at Babylon, he was quick to jump to a conclusion which turned out to be wrong. It is a case, however, which not even Badian brought into his much-discussed argument for a "reign of terror".⁶³

60 D.S. XVII 116.4; Deinon *FGH* 690 T 2.

61 HUBER, "Ersatzkönige" (n. 20), 348 n. 112 on possible "silence" and 377, for Hittite "precedents".

62 Curt. VIII 4.15–17.

63 E. BADIEN, "Harpalus", *JHS* 81 (1961), 16–43 and his "Conspiracies", in: A.B. Bosworth and E.J. Baynham (eds.) *Alexander* (n. 11) 50–93.

Which Way North?

Retracing Alexander's Route to Marakanda in the Spring of 328 BC.¹

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In the early spring of 328 BC, Alexander set out from Baktra to crush an armed rebellion in Baktria and Sogdiana. Modern analysis of the accounts contained chiefly in Arrian and Curtius, including Pliny's discourse on the city of Margiana, has led to divergent views as to the route that Alexander and his army followed as well as the sequence of events that unfolded throughout this period.

According to Arrian, Alexander crossed the Hindu Kush in early spring 329 BC in pursuit of Bessos (III 28.4–8) and proceeded to Baktra (mod. Balkh), the country's capital, by way of Drapsaka (mod. Kunduz)² and Aornos (Shahr-i-Banu?)³ (III 29.1). In mid-summer he advanced to the Oksos (mod. Amu Darya) and crossed into Sogdiana at or near Kelif.⁴ Bessos by this time had fled to Marakanda (Afasiab in mod. Samarkand), Sogdiana's capital, where he was captured (III 29.2–30.5). Soon afterward Alexander founded Alexandria Eschate along the southern bank of the Jaxartes/Tanais (mod. Syr Darya) near Khujand or Khodzhen (formerly Leninabad) in Tajikistan (IV 4.1), suppressed a native revolt involving seven cities, the largest of which was Kyropolis (IV 2.1–3.5), and formed an alliance of peace with a local Skythian king after having crossed the Tanais and defeating a contingent of Skythians (IV 3.6–5.1). After spending the winter of 329–328 BC in Baktra/Zariaspa (IV 7.1), Alexander returned to the Oksos in early spring 328 BC with the purpose of invading Sogdiana having learned that many Sogdians had sought protection in various fortresses and would not submit to the satrap whom he had appointed to govern them. While he was still in camp on the Oksos a spring of water and another of oil near his tent came up from the ground (IV 15.7–8). Prior to his departure from Baktria, Alexander had left behind four officers – Polyperchon, Attalus, Gorgias, and Meleager – with orders

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- 1 I would like to thank Professor James Powell for his criticisms and helpful suggestions. Any errors are my exclusive responsibility. For reasons of philology, I have adopted the less common spelling of Oksos (instead of Oxos) in order to avoid any confusion with another river called Okhos.
 - 2 For the identification, F. VON SCHWARZ, *Alexanders des Grossen Feldzüge in Turkestan. Kommentar zu den Geschichtswerken des Flavius Arrianus und Q. Curtius Rufus auf Grund vieljähriger Reisen im russischen Turkestan und den angrenzenden Ländern*², Stuttgart 1906, 5–7; more recently Э.В. РТВЕЛАДЗЕ, *Александр Македонский в Бактрии и Согдиане. Историко-географические очерки*, Tashkent 2002, 14, 28–66.
 - 3 D.W. ENGELS, *Alexander the Great and the Logistics of the Macedonian Army*, Berkeley/Los Angeles/London 1978, 97 with notes 111–112.
 - 4 On the identification of Kelif, VON SCHWARZ, *Alexanders* (n. 2), 30–33; РТВЕЛАДЗЕ, *Александр* (n. 2), 14, 28–66; Ю.Ф. БУРЯКОВ, *Торговые трассы Трансоксианы – Мавераннахра в системе Великого Шелкового Пути*, Zurich 2006, 8.

to destroy all inhabitants who refused to submit, to safeguard the country, and to remain alert for any further signs of strife. Having made his way across the Oksos into Sogdiana, Alexander divided his troops into five columns: Hephaestion commanded one division; Ptolemy, son of Lagus, the bodyguard, another; Perdikkas was placed over the third; Koinos and Artabazos led the fourth; and Alexander himself commanded the fifth, whereupon he advanced into the country towards Marakanda. Each of the commanders were ordered to storm forts and to conduct attacks as opportunity permitted, destroying brutally those who had sought safety in the strongholds and obtaining the surrender of others. By the time the entire force reunited at Marakanda, the greater part of Sogdiana had been traversed (IV 16.1–3). Hephaestion was then charged with the further task of planting settlements in various towns, while Alexander and the rest of the army chased down various rebels including Spitamenes (IV 16.3–5). The year closed with Alexander wintering at Nautaka (IV 18.1).

In Curtius' account, the spring of 329 BC is marked by Alexander's pursuit of Bessos, who had made his way across the Oksos into Sogdiana, while Alexander made his way to Baktra after having crossed the Hindu Kush (VII 4.5–32). After a short duration, he crossed the Oksos and entered Sogdiana where he encountered the town of the Branchidai, probably in the piedmont of the Kugitantau,⁵ and massacred all its inhabitants (VII 5.1–35). From there he proceeded northward to the Tanais where Bessos was captured (VII 5.36). Although Alexander spent some time at Marakanda, he was soon faced with the task of quelling a rebellion fomented in the country's cities, including Kyropolis (VII 6.13–23), after which he was able to found another Alexandria on the banks of the Tanais (VII 6.25–27). This was followed by an excursus across the Tanais and the defeat of the Skythians (VII 8.5–19). The campaigning season in Sogdiana ended with the massacre of Menedemos' column near Marakanda by Spitamenes (VII 6.24, 30–39). In revenge, Alexander divided his forces, burned the countryside, and executed all males of military age (VII 8.20–22). Having left Peucolaus in Sogdiana with 3,000 infantry (VII 10.10), Alexander arrived at Baktra where he received further reinforcements and spent the winter. In the spring of 328 BC he left the city, subduing revolts in nearby provinces and arrived at the river Oksos four days later. It was there that the miraculous spring of fresh water was found in his tent. He then crossed the rivers Okhos, then Oksos and came to the city of Margiana,⁶ around which he founded six towns located close enough to one another so as to ren-

5 L.M. SVERCHKOV, "The Kurganzol fortress (On the history of Central Asia in the Hellenistic period)", *Ancient civilizations from Scythia to Siberia* 4 (2008), 165. The primary analyses on the massacre of the Branchidai in modern historiography remain, F.W. ZSCHIEDT-SCHMANN, "Branchidae", in: G. E. Mylonas and D. Raymond (eds.), *Studies presented to D. M. Robinson*, II, St. Louis 1953, 1039–1043; H.W. PARKE, "The massacre of the Branchidae", *JHS* 1985 (1985), 59–68; and N.G.L. HAMMOND, "The Branchidae at Didyma and in Sogdiana", *CQ* 48 (1998), 339–344; cf. the recent work of D.V. PANCHENKO, "The city of the Branchidae and the question of Greek contribution to the intellectual history of India and China", *Hyperboreus* 8/2 (2002), 244–255.

6 As we shall later see, the operative passage in this account is Curt. VII 15: "Superatis deinde amnibus Ocho et Oxo ad urbem Margianam pervenit. Circa eam VI oppidis condendis electa sedes est, duo ad meridem versa, IIII spectantia orientem. Cf. Metz Epitome 14: Deinde per agrum Sogdianum agmen duxit ex eo porro in Bactriam pervenit et Bessum adduci iussit eum que suspensum more Persarum fundis necavit. Deinde post diem undecimum ad flumen Ochum pervenit id transit inde ad Oxum flumen devenit."

der one another aid quickly should the need arise (VII 10.13–15). Subsequently, Alexander captured a rock held by the Sogdian Ariamazes with 30,000 soldiers, resettling most of those who surrendered into the six towns that he had recently established (VII 11.1–29). It was at this point that Alexander divided his army into three columns: Hephaestion was given one division, Coenus commanded the second, and Alexander led the third (VIII 1.1). Operating from Marakanda for much of the year, Alexander subdued the district of Bazaira (VIII 1.1–19), followed the seizure of Xenippa on the border of Skythia where a number of Baktrians had taken refuge (VIII 2.13–18). He then made the Sogdian city of Nautaka his winter quarters for 328–327 BC.

Pliny the Elder (*Nat.* VI 18, 47) also records the foundations of the same Margiana in the Merv oasis of the Murghab Delta by Alexander and then Antiochos as appears in Curtius' account. We thus learn from Pliny that Margiana is a district that is 1,500 stadia in circumference and comprises sandy deserts that extend some 120 miles. The country, which lies opposite of Parthia, contains the city of Alexandria founded by Alexander. After it had been destroyed by barbarians, Antiochos, son of Seleukos, rebuilt it as a Syrian city, calling it Antiochia. In circumference the city is seventy stadia and is watered by the river Margos. It was here that Orodes settled the Roman survivors of Crassus' defeat. The savage race of the Mardi, a free people, extends from the summits of the district's mountains through the Caucasus to the Bactria. Pliny's account⁷ in the main was followed generally by Martianus Capella (VI 691), who also states that the city was founded by Alexander and called such, but was subsequently renamed Seleukeia:

“Raegionis praedictae amoenitatem Alexxander Magnus delegerat et ibi primo nominis sui condiderat civitatem, quae excise est et ab Antiocho Seleuci filio reparata cum nomine patris eiusdem.”

For his part Solinus' account agrees with Martianus Capella's in that the city once called Alexandria after its founder was refounded as Seleukeia (48.3):

“regionis huius amoenitatem Alexander Magnus usque adeo miratus est ut ibi primum Alexandriam condideret: quam mox a barbaris excisam Antiochus Seleuci filius reformavit et de nuncupatione domus suae dixit Seleuciam.”

The importance of these brief passages have led to two recent schools of thought about the direction that Alexander and his army took from Baktra to Marakanda in spring 328 BC. One group maintains, albeit with certain nuances, that the Makedonians marched eastward before marching north to arrive at Marakanda. On the way Alexander founded in Sogdiana a city called Alexandria Marginia or Margania. The other group has the army traveling westward to Margiana where Alexander founded the city bearing his name (Alexandria Margiana) before turning north to arrive at the Sogdian capital. Both interpretations hinge on the understanding of what Curtius (VII 10.15) had written for the name and location of the Alexandrian foundation. Did he intend Margania/Marginia as the first group maintains, or as the second group holds did Curtius signify, along with Pliny and his followers, Margiana?⁸

⁷ The accounts of Isidoros (*FGrH* 781 F2 [14]) and Strabo (XI 10.2 [576]) only refer to Antiochia.

⁸ J.C. ROLFE, “Introduction”, in: *Quintus Curtius with an English translation by J.C. Rolfe*, I–II, Cam-

1 The Eastern Route

Bosworth initiated the idea that Alexander followed an eastern trek prior to making his way northward to Marakanda in 328 BC.⁹ He understands these accounts to mean that Alexander left Baktra in the spring to begin the year's campaign by marching east along the Oksos valley, until he crossed the river Okhos, which he identifies as the Kunduz, and thereby entered the Kokcha valley. After suppressing the rebellions in this part of the country, Alexander reconnoitered the future site of Ai Khanoum, which he may (or may not) have founded at this time, and crossed the Oksos, into eastern Sogdiana, from where he ultimately made his way to Marakanda. Ai Khanoum, however, was not one of the six cities in Sogdiana associated with a city that Bosworth proposes was called Marginia or Margania, which he located in the hills of Tajikistan somewhere between the river valleys of the Wakhsh and Kafirnigan. It is possible that they may have been established as far west as the Iron Gates at Derbent thereby encompassing the entire region between the north bank of the Oksos and the Hissar range. Bosworth readily admits that the site of Marginia/Margania and the six towns associated with it have yet to be located. He cautions, however, that Marginia/Margania should in no way be regarded as a corruption of the spelling of the city of Margiana in the Merv oasis that Pliny (Nat. VI 47) states was founded by Alexander as an Alexandria in the oasis of Margiana (modern Merv), subsequently destroyed by nomads and refounded by Antiochos I as Antiochia Margiana. The confusion is due to a corruption in the transmission of Curtius' manuscript in which "Margianam" appears as the corrective of either "Marganiam" or "Marginiam." Thus the western Alexandria Margiana in the Merv oasis is an entirely different foundation from the eastern "Margania" or "Marginia" that Alexander purportedly founded in 328 BC. Moreover, Bosworth stresses that Strabo recorded two rivers named Okhos, one in the west which he postulates was the Atrek that ran into the Caspian, the other he places east of Baktra and has flowing into the Oksos, which he thus concludes was the river Kunduz.¹⁰

Grenet and Rapin agree with Bernard that Alexander captured Margiana and divided the army into five divisions north of the Oksos,¹¹ as well as with some of the proposals ad-

bridge, Mass./London 1946, I, 216 n. 6 for all three variations. A concise survey of the relevant sources and problems associated with each is provided by P.M. FRASER, *Cities of Alexander the Great*, Oxford 1996, 30–31, 35–36, 116–118, who is unable to reach any resolution; here as elsewhere on the Hellenistic Far East, Cohen omits the pertinent publications (G.M. COHEN, *The Hellenistic Settlements in the East from Armenia and Mesopotamia to Bactria and India*, Berkeley 2012, 245–250).

9 A.B. BOSWORTH, "A missing year in the history of Alexander the Great", *JHS* 101 (1981), 23–29, 36–37; A. B. BOSWORTH, *A Historical Commentary on Arrian's History of Alexander*, I: *Commentary on Books IV–V*, Oxford 1995, 108–110. Bosworth is by no means the first to question Curtius' veracity and the possibility that Alexander went elsewhere, e.g., J. KAERST, *Geschichte des Hellenismus*, I², Leipzig/Berlin 1927, 81, 439; И.Н. ХЛОПИН, "Александр македонский в Маргиане", *Klio* 53 (1971), 157–160; И.Н. ХЛОПИН, "Александр македонский в Маргиане", in: М.Е. Грабарь-Пассек, М. Л. Гаспаров and Т. И. Кузнецова (eds.), *Александр македонский в Маргиане Античность и современность: к 80-летию Федора Александровича Петровского* Moscow 1972, 187–190; И.Н. ХЛОПИН, *Историческая география южных областей Средней Азии (античность и раннее средневековье)*, Ashgabat 1983, 163–166.

10 Str. XI 7.3 [509], XI 11.5 [578]; cf. Plin. Nat. VI 49; XXXI 75; Ptol. Geog. XI 2.4; Amm. Marc. XXIII 6.57.

11 P. BERNARD, "Alexandre et Ai Khanoum", *JS* 1982 (1982), 125–138.

vanced by Bosworth, such as the location of Marginia-Margania in the valley of Wakhsh or Kafirnigan. They identify the Kunduz, however, as the Dargomanes of Ptolemy (VI 11.2, 18.2), not as the Okhos. Instead they equate the Okhos with the Piandzh corresponding to its Iranian form as the Wakhan, or Wakh. This latter appellation has survived as the Wakhsh Daria, forming the southern tributary of the Piandzh after it joins with the Pamir. According to this scenario, the Piandzh acts as the easternmost tributary of the Amu Darya. They mark the beginning of the Oksos (Amu Darya) at the confluence of the Wakhsh, the Piandzh, and the Kunduz. From that point to the Aral Sea, the Amu Darya is represented by the middle course and the lower course of the Oksos, respectively.¹²

Having established the identity of the rivers Okhos and Oksos, they attempt a reconstruction of the events that unfolded in the spring of 328 BC. They have Alexander leave Baktra and make his way across the Okhos=Piandzh at the ford of Arkhan, some 75 km from the confluence of the Wakhsh and Piandzh. The crossing occurred near the site of Takhti-i Sangin. Alexander thereby entered Sogdiana from the east having made his way across the Oksos/Wakhsh. At this point he divided the army into five columns. It was during this campaigning season that Alexander founded at or near Termez, Termez-Marginia/Margania (subsequently called Tarmita) as Alexandria Oxiana which they situate in Baktria, in part because they place Sogdiana north of the Oksos valley. The border between Baktria and Sogdiana was called Pareitakai, situated in the Baysun Mountains and their foothills, where the Iron Gates of Derbent is located and served as the crossroads between Baktria and Sogdiana.¹³ A linguistic analysis of the synonymous of Margania (and

12 F. GRENET and C. RAPIN, "Alexander, Ai Khanoum, Termez: remarks on the spring campaign of 328", *Bulletin of the Asia Institute* 12 (1998), 79–81; C. RAPIN, "L'Afghanistan et l'Asie centrale dans la géographie mythique des historiens d'Alexandre et dans la toponymie des géographes gréco-romains. Notes sur la route d'Herat à Begram", in: O. Boppearachchi and M.-Fr. Boussac (eds.), *Afghanistan. Ancien carrefour entre l'Est et l'Ouest. Actes du Colloque international organisé par Ch. Landes et O. Boppearachchi au Musée archéologique Henri-Prades-Lattes du 5 au 7 mai 2003*, Brussels 2004, 144. One result of these identifications is that they reject the notion that Ai Khanoum was Alexandria Oxiana and that it was located in Sogdiana with the Kokcha acting as the border between Baktria and Sogdiana (P. BERNARD and H.-P. FRANCFORT, *Études de géographie historique sur la plaine d'Ai Khanoum (Afghanistan)*, Paris 1978, 3–9), or, as B. LYONNET (*Prospection archéologiques en Bactriane orientale [1974–1978] sous la direction de Jean-Claude Gardin, V.2: Céramique et peuplement du chalcolithique à la conquête Arabe*, Paris 1997, 154–155) advocates, the Kunduz had served as the border between the two countries; cf. B. LYONNET, "The problem of the frontiers between Baktria and Sogdiana: an old discussion and new data", in: A. J. Gail and G. J. R. Mevissen (eds.), *South Asian Archaeology 1991: Proceedings of the eleventh international conference of the Association of South Asian Archaeologists in Western Europe held in Berlin 1–5 July 1991*, Stuttgart 1993, 197–199.

13 GRENET and RAPIN, "Alexander" (n. 12), 81–86. For an overview of the region and a survey of the archaeological remains, see III. РАХМАНОВ and К. РАПЕН, "Железные ворота", *Труды Байсунской научной экспедиции*, 1 (2003), 22–32. Cf. III. РАХМАНОВ and К. РАПЕН, "Стратегический пограничный узел Железных Ворот: меняющийся статус границ от греческих свидетельств до средневековых эпопей", in: А. Саидов (ed.), *Transoxiana. История и культура. Культура Средней Азии в письменных источниках, документах, материалах. Сборник научных статей. Сборник посвящен отмеченному в 2002 году 60-летию крупнейшего ученого, одного из ведущих современных исследователей истории, археологии, нумизматики, эпиграфики, культуры и искусства Средней Азии и Востока в целом – Эдварда Васильевича Ртвеладзе*, Tashkent 2004, 150–151; RAPIN, "Afghanistan" (n. 12), 144, 155; cf. C. RAPIN, "Nomads and the shaping of Central Asia: from the Early Iron Age to the Kushan Period", in: J. Cribb and G. Herrmann (eds.), *After Alexan-*

presumably Marginia) lead them to conclude that the name signifies a “land of meadows,” since toponyms of Iranian origin with the root *marg* mean ‘meadow’ or ‘prairie.’ As a result, Margania and Margiana are variants of the same name. In this case, the only site that conforms to this interpretation is the region in which Termez is situated, while the city acted as a “ford, the crossing-point.” They accept Tarn’s argument that Termez was founded by Alexander as Alexandria Oxiana, while they conjecture that four of the six fortresses established at this time were located at Fayaz-Tepe, Kara-Tepe, Chingiz-Tepe I, or Great Chingiz, and Chingiz-Tepe II (Lesser Chingiz).¹⁴

Subsequently, they revised some of their views. For example, they now maintain that the Hissar-Baisun-Kugitang mountain system, and consequently the Iron Gates, marked the frontier between Baktria and Sogdiana only in the post-Hellenistic, Kushan period from the first to the third century CE, because as they now assert the Oksos played that role throughout antiquity. On the other hand, they remain steadfast in the assignment that the Oksos corresponds to the Wakhsh, becoming the Amu Darya proper at its confluent with the Piandzh and thus designating the middle of the Oksos/Amu Darya proper.¹⁵ Leriche, however, the director of the MAFOuz excavations of Northern Baktria, especially at Termez, took issue with a number of their arguments.¹⁶ As a result, Grenet and Rapin have agreed not to call Termez, Margania, although they remain adamant that the site was Alexandria Oxiana and Antioch Tarmita, respectively.¹⁷ In so doing, the city of Margania/Marginia was left without a location and just when it seemed that their argument had run its course, another compromise was affected; this time by Sverchkov.

After dismissing any association of Margania with either Merv or Termez, Sverchkov proposed that Alexander’s army advanced eastward along the Oksos to the crossing at Arkhan (Sherkhan) on the lower Okhos-Piandzh, from where Alexander then turned in a northwesterly direction and crossed the Oksos-Wakhsh making his way across the

der: *Central Asia before Islam*, New York 2007, 45–47.

14 GRENET and RAPIN, “Alexander” (n. 12), 82–84; cf. W.W. TARN, *The Greeks in Bactria and India*,² Cambridge 1951, 118–119 and 525, who locates the city in Sogdiana after Ptol. *Geog.* VI 12.6.

15 E.g., F. GRENET, “The Pre-Islamic civilization of the Sogdians (seventh century BC to eighth century CE): a bibliographic essay (studies since 1986)”, *The Silkroad Foundation Newsletter* 2/1 (2003), 31, s.v. 5. Toponymy, historical geography; C. RAPIN, A. BAUD, F. GRENET and S.A. RAKHMANOV, “Les recherches sur la région des Portes de Fer de Sogdiane: bref état des questions en 2005”, *История материальной культуры Узбекистана (ИМКУ)* 35 (2006), 48–59, who are now in agreement with И.В. ПЯНКОВ, *Бактрия в античной традиции (Общие данные о стране: название и территория)*, Moscow 1982, 34–54 that the Oksos was the pre-Kushan administrative frontier between Baktria and Sogdiana, while the Iron Gates were fortified because they served as a frontier post safeguarding the road between Baktria and Sogdiana; cf. BERNARD, “Alexandre” (n. 11), 21–38.

16 P. LERICHE, “Termez foundation d’Alexandre?”, *JA* 290 (2002), 411–415; cf. SVERCHKOV, “Kurganzol” (n. 5), 170 with n. 52 who agrees with Leriche that the archaeological remains from Termez do not substantiate the claim that it had been Alexandria Oxiana.

17 RAPIN, BAUD, GRENET and RAKHMANOV, “Recherches” (n.15), 48–50. The identification of Termez as Alexandria Oxiana is far from certain; see e.g., the recent proposal of Э.В. РТВЕЛАДЗЕ, “К истории Кампыртепа (Александрии Оксианской)”, in: В.П. Никоноров, (ed.), *Центральная Азия от Ахеменидов до Тимуридов: археология, история, этнология, культура. Материалы международной научной конференции, посвящённой 100-летию со дня рождения Александра Марковича Беленицкого (СПб, 2–5 ноября 2004 г.)*, Saint Petersburg 2005, 189–190, who argues that Kampyr-tepa should bear this distinction.

Kafirigan and the Surkhan Darya, where he founded, or renamed, the city of Margania-Marginia at the site of Bandykhan II situated along the Bandykhansai (Baysunsai) river at the entrance to the Baysun Basin occupying the southeastern part of the foothills.¹⁸ Two fortresses associated with the founding of Margania/Marginia–Bandykhan II further up the Baisun Depression are Kurganzol and seven kilometers north Poenkurgan along the northern bank of the Bandykhansai (Baysunsai) river, corresponding to the region of Pare-taka/Paretakena. In this way, Sverchkov concludes that Alexander's march after proceeding in an easterly, then northerly direction took a direct approach from the crossing at Arkhan to the Iron Gates at Derbent in the northwest and thus permitted Alexander direct access to Sogdiana. Alexander had successfully navigated his way to Marakanda by avoiding the detour imposed by advancing northward from either Margiana at Merv or Termez. Curtius was not discussing Margiana in the Merv oasis, but Margania/Marginia in the Bandykhansai (Baysunsai) valley.¹⁹

Most recently, Rapin has greatly revised the work he and Grenet had proposed and in its place he has created a much more elaborate scheme that seeks to take into account all of Alexander's Central Asian campaigns from 330 to 327 BC. The result has enabled him to revise much of the geo-political and cultural history of the region, including the role that Aï Khanoum played. Rapin now considers the site to have held a prominent, central place in Baktria throughout the Hellenistic period. In the early spring of 328 BC, Alexander left Baktra and marched eastward crossing the river Okhos/Piandzh near the city of Aï Khanoum (called by two names: Oskobara or Ostobara [Ptol. *Geog.* VI 11.9] and Eukratideia [Ptol. *Geog.* VI 11.8]), which divided eastern Baktria north and south. According to this interpretation, the Okhos/Piandzh no longer served to designate the border between Baktria and Sogdiana. That role was left to the Wakhsh/Oksos, separating eastern Northern Baktria from Sogdiana in the west. Aï Khanoum situated at the confluence of the Okhos/Piandzh and the Dargoidos/Kokcha (Ptol. *Geog.* VI 11.2–4) was at the heart of the crossroads linking eastern and western Baktria, while the Kunduz/Aornos was relegated to a link on the highway connecting the Hindu Kush passes with Baktra.²⁰ Having crossed the Oksos at

18 Л.М. СВЕРЧКОВ, “Александр Македонский в Маргании”, in: В.П. Никоноров, (ed.), *Центральная Азия от Ахеменидов до Тимуридов: археология, история, этнология, культура. Материалы международной научной конференции, посвящённой 100-летию со дня рождения Александра Марковича Беленицкого (СПб, 2–5 ноября 2004 г.)*, Saint Petersburg 2005, 191–193; SVERCHKOV, “Kurganzol” (n. 5), 170–173; Л. М. СВЕРЧКОВ, *Курганзол — крепость Александра на юге Узбекистана*, Tashkent 2013, 122–136.

19 Sverchkov's route generally mirrors the itinerary taken by von Schwarz and to a large extent the route that he proposed that Alexander had also followed, the only difference is that Sverchkov envisions a straighter, more direct route from the crossing of the Wakhsh effected at the Shir–Khan to Bandykhan. See the map insert in VON SCHWARZ, *Alexanders* (n. 2), [i], “Uebersichtskarte der Feldzüge Alexanders in Turkestan im Maassstab 1:5200 000.” The notion that Margania/Marginia should be identified as “Marakanda” and hence Afrasiab or Samarkand places the entire episode out of historical context (И.В. ПЯНКОВ, “Мараканды”, *ВДИ* 1 (1970), 34, 39, 46–48; И.В. ПЯНКОВ, *Древний Самарканд (Мараканды) в известиях античных авторов*, Dushanbe 1972, 26, 45, 48–49; И.В. ПЯНКОВ, “Античные источники о Средней Азии и их интерпретация. По поводу двух работ Ф. Грене и К. Рапена”, *ВДИ* 2004/1; for a survey of the earlier literature, see BERNARD, “Alexandre” (n. 11), 126 n. 4).

20 C. RAPIN, “On the way to Roxane: the route of Alexander the Great in Bactria and Sogdiana (328–327 BC)”, in: G. Lindström et al. (Hrsgs.), *Zwischen Ost und West – neue Forschungen zum antiken Zent-*

some point near its confluence with the Okhos near Nurek, the Makedonians entered Sogdiana, where Alexander marched through southern Sogdiana along the upper Darya basin to the Iron Gates near Derbent.²¹ It was at this time that he divided the army into five divisions with the intent of conquering the entire region: Hephaestion was charged with the middle Wakhsh to Takht-i Sangin; Ptolemy had the Kafirnigan; Perdikkas was given the task of reducing the middle Surkhan Darya in ancient Paretakene where the rock of Chorienes (Arr. *An.* IV 21.1–9) at Kyzkurgan in the vicinity of Bandykhan was captured; Koenos and Artabazos operated in the region between Paretakene and the Iron Gates, including the Sharabad Darya basin in ancient Oxiana along the eastern slope of the Hissar range where the rock of Arimazes was captured, after which Koenos continued on his own marching against Spitamenes; the fifth under Alexander proceeded to Marakanda where the rest of the forces subsequently rendezvoused.²² It was in the region of the Iron Gates near the rock where Arimazes, the satrap of Oksiana, had fled. Its location is perhaps north or south of Bandykhan, near which Margania/Marginia was founded along with the fortresses of Kurganzol and Paenkurgan. In this scenario, the city of Margania/Marginia is different from the city of Margiana in the Merv oasis, with which Alexander presumably had had some contact in 330 BC on his way toward Bactria in pursuit of Bessos.²³ Finally, Rapin has Alexander subduing the rock of Sogdiana on Mount Kapkagly-auzy near Akrobat in 327 BC while on his way southward to Baktra, and attacking the stronghold of Sisimithres, satrap of Nautaka. Here he also encountered Roxane and her family, including Oxyartes who had previously betrayed Alexander. Shortly thereafter Alexander and Roxane married at the feast hosted by Chorienes, not Oxyartes.²⁴

As matters stand, this line of reasoning creates more problems than solutions. Rather than helping to clarify an already muddled historiographic tradition, the arguments made in support of an eastern trek suffer from a variety of methodological weaknesses, of which four are the most serious: the identification of the headwaters of the Oksos/Amu Darya as the Okhos; the notion that Alexander founded a supposed city called either Marginia or Margania in Sogdiana; the fortresses of Paenkurgan and Kurganzol as Alexandrian foundations; and the use of Klaudios Ptolemaios' *Geographia*.

2 The rivers Okhos and Oksos

Grenet and Rapin equate the ancient Greek names of the rivers Okhos and Oksos with their Old Iranian counterparts, Wahwī- and Waxšu-, respectively.²⁵ Their argument relies on the proposal advanced by Steblin-Kamenskii who argues that the derivation $x < hw$ is possible in Wakhi (where $xš$ always becomes $š$) and thus poses two series:²⁶

ralasien. *Wissenschaftliches Kolloquium 30.09. bis 02.10.2009 in den Reiss-Engelhorn-Museen Mannheim*, Darmstadt 2013, 47–50.

21 RAPIN, "On the way" (n. 20), 51, 54.

22 RAPIN, "On the way" (n. 20), 55–57.

23 RAPIN, "On the way" (n. 20), 43, 49, 57.

24 RAPIN, "On the way" (n. 20), 57–78 on the three rocks Alexander captured in 328–327 BC.

25 GRENET and RAPIN, "Alexander" (n. 12), 80–81 with n. 13.

26 И.М. СТЕБЛИН-КАМЕНСКИЙ, "Река иранской прародины", in: В.В. Волгина (ed.), *Ономастика Средней Азии*, Moscow 1978, 72–74. He bases his conclusion on the work of К.А. ИНОСТРАНЦЕВ, "Река Иран-Вэджа в парсийской традиции", *Известия Российской Академии Наук* 6/12 (1917),

Old. Ir. Wahwī- / Greek Ὠχος, Ὀχος / Wakhi Wux / Pers. (Tajik) Wakh;
 Old Ir. Waxšu- / Greek Ὠξος, Ὀξος / Pers. (Tajik) Wakhsh

They also refer to the 1902 publication of Aristov who states that in Wakhi the river Piandzh to its confluence with the river Wakhsh is called the Wakhan.²⁷ He adds that his informants told him that the Wakhsh is regarded as the source of the Amu Darya. He then surmises that the Wakhsh was called by various names in different languages, including the Oksos in Greek.²⁸ For Grenet and Rapin the river Oksos (Ὠξος, Ὀξος) is a transliteration of the Old Iranian Waxšu-, while the Greek name of the river Okhos (Ὠχος, Ὀχος) corresponds to the Old Iranian Wahwī-.²⁹ They fail to include, however, Steblin-Kamenskii's note of caution, namely that the contradictory information of the ancient authors allows us to identify the river Okhos (<Old Iranian vahi- 'good') not only with the headwaters of the Piandzh in the mountains of the Western Pamir and the Eastern Hindu Kush, i.e., in the region, adjacent to ancient Bactria, but also with the rivers on the territory of Parthia or adjacent to it, especially, with the Tedzhen-Hari-rud or with the Atrek. As such, there is nothing remarkable about the name Vahvī- 'good, fertile' – because it can be applied to any river in Central Asia where the population is composed of Iranian speakers.³⁰ In other words, the idea that there can be two or more rivers named Okhos in different parts of the Iranian speaking world should not come as a surprise, since the name itself simply connotes the idea of 'good, fertile' and, therefore, is not limited to the Amu Darya *per se*, because it references any rich agricultural region.

893 who identified the river Wakhan/Piandzh as the *Avestan* Vahvī Dātyā, confirmed by J. MARKWART and H.H. SCHAEFER, *Wehrot und Arang: Untersuchungen zur mythischen und geschichtlichen Landeskunde von Ostiran*, Leiden 1938, 52 who showed that the river Wux (Wakhan) is identical to the river Okhos of the ancient authors, and Wekhrudu (Middle Persian Vēhrōt) of the Middle Persian sources as proposed by H. Yule (J. WOOD and H. YULE, *A Journey to the Source of the River Oxus with an Essay on the Geography of the Valley of the Oxus by Henry Yule*, London 1872, 23 with n. 1) and W. TOMASCHEK, "Centralasiatische Studien. I. Sogdiana", *Sitzungsberichte der Philosophisch-Historischen Classe der Kaiserlichen Akademie der Wissenschaften*, 87 (1877), 109.

27 Н.А. АРИСТОВ, "Этнические отношения на Памире прилегающих странах до древним, преимущественно китайским, историческим известиям", *Русский антропологический журнал* 3 (1902), 62–84.

28 АРИСТОВ, "Этнические" (n. 27), 66 with n. 6.

29 According to Nicholas Sims-Williams, there are numerous ways to formulate other arguments equating the ancient Greek names of the two rivers, Ὠχος/Ὀχος and Ὠξος/Ὀξος with their Old Iranian counterparts, Wahwī- and Waxšu-, respectively. For example, the names "Wakh" and "Wakhsh/Oksos" could be the same name, if they derive not from Wakhi but are borrowed from another language of the region in which xš does become š. He notes, for example, that "in Baktrian the word for 'increase, interest' is wakh < *waxša- "and points out that the river Oksos in Baktrian is called Wakhsh, whose form derives from a different language or dialect. He is quick to add, however, that "an explanation on these lines could hardly apply to an ancient form like the Greek Ὠχος, Ὀχος, so it does seem that two different river names, Waxšu- and Wahwī- (or similar), have to be distinguished, even if there was later some geographical and/or linguistic confusion between them" (personal communication).

30 СТЕБЛИН-КАМЕНСКИЙ, "Пека" (n. 26), 73–74; cf. I. KHLOPIN, "Zur Lösung des Rätsels des Akes-Flusses (HERODOTOS III.117)", *OLP* 2 (1971), 137.

Moreover, Grenet and Rapin³¹ emphasize that Barthold clearly expressed the view that

“The ancient Aryan name of the Amu-Darya, Wakhshu or Wakhshu, was preserved in the name of the river Wakhsh (Surkhab), from which it may be concluded that in ancient times this river was considered to be the head-water of the Amu-Darya.”³²

They omit, however, that on the same page Barthold elaborated noting that according to Abū Rayḥān al-Bīrūnī “in the eleventh century Wakhsh was still called the spirit-protector of the waters, and especially of the Amu-Darya. Even now, according to Regel the term Wakhsh is applied not only to the Surkhab, but also to the Panj and some other tributaries of the Amu-Darya.” And what Regel informs us is that the name of the Wakhsh was not limited to the Wakhsh (Surkhab) but was commonly used to signify the rivers in the upper regions of the Amu Darya, among which was the Piandzh.³³ Thus the tradition records that the Amu Darya and the Piandzh along with other tributaries of the Amu Darya were all known as the Wakhsh simultaneously. We might also add that if we include Steblin-Kamenskii’s observation about the use of the name of Wakhan for the Piandzh, we should not be surprised to find other rivers similarly called by this name, including those that are also called Wakhsh as well as by other names. For example, the Wakhsh has multiple names: in its upper course in Kyrgyzstan it is known as the Kyzyl-Su, in Tajikistan in its middle course it is called the Surkhab, and in its lower course at the confluence with the Amu Darya it receives the designation of Wakhsh.³⁴

The underlying preconception of Grenet and Rapin’s argument is that the names of these rivers today are the same as those which Alexander and his army encountered some 2,300 years ago. This in turn is buttressed on the supposition that although different people inhabited these regions over the course of millennia, each group retained the original name given to both the Amu Darya and the Piandzh. All of which makes it impossible to accept the proposal of Grenet and Rapin: it is highly unlikely that the names Wakhan and Wakhsh, which the Greeks in Alexander’s retinue transliterated as Okhos and Oksos, respectively, each designated only one river and were not used for others. On this basis we are compelled to reject the premise that the Wakhsh/Surkhab should be regarded as the Oksos and thus the headwaters of the Amu Darya, while the Piandzh identified as the Okhos should be reduced to little more than a tributary of the Amu Darya and not as its source.

31 GRENET and RAPIN, “Alexander” (n. 12), 80 n. 9.

32 V.V. BARTHOLD, *Turkestan down to the Mongol Invasion*³, London 1968, 65.

33 According to A. REGEL, “Albert Regels Reise in Darwas, Nov. und Dec. 1883”, *Petermanns Mitteilungen* 1884, 333 with map 13 (cf. W.L. GEIGER, *Die Pamir-Gebiete: Eine geographische Monographie...mit einer Karte*, Vienna 1887, 136 n.1; J.Æ.C.A. Timmerman, “De ontwikkeling onzer kennis van het Pamir-Gebied”, *Tijdschrift van het Koninklijk Nederlandsch Aardrijkskundig Genootschap*, ser. 2, 6/1 [1889], 293 with n.1 and 294), “the name Wakhsh is by no means limited to the Surkhab, but is also applied to the Pianj and some other tributaries of the Amu-Darya” (BARTHOLD, *Turkestan* (n. 32), 65 n. 3); cf. Regel’s abbreviated statement in English: “The natives have a fancy for calling the Panj one head of the Oxus and the Wanj the other” (A. REGEL, “Dr. Albert Regel’s journey in Karateghin and Darwaz”, *Proceedings of the Royal Geographical Society* 4 [1882], 414).

34 E.g., W.J. VOGELSANG, *The Rise and Organisation of the Achaemenid Empire: The Eastern Iranian Evidence*, Leiden/New York/Köln 1992, 64 n. 57, 67.

3 Margiana, Margania, and Marginia

In order to understand the context for the emendation of *Margianam* for *Marganiam* or *Marginiam* (Curt. VII 10.15 [919]), it is important to keep in mind that this is not an isolated incident in the manuscript tradition of the *Historiae*. Among extant manuscripts, five are regarded as the finest: (P) Parisinus Latinus, beginning of the tenth century; (B) Bernensis, ninth century; (F) Florentinus Laurentianus, end of the tenth/beginning of the eleventh century; (L) Leidensis, tenth century; and (V) Leidensis Vossianus, tenth century. Each, however, suffers from problems due to changes made to it over the course of time. These manuscripts can be separated into two groups. The first consists of (P) which at some point after its production was subjected to a series of “corrections” and later in the fourteenth century further revisions were introduced by someone who drew from (B) or some other comparable text. Unfortunately, the latter changes served only to detract from the manuscript rather than to enhance it. The second group consists of (B), (F), (L), and (V); these manuscripts show various states of incompleteness. Like (P) all underwent a variety of modifications, including corrections, erasures, revisions, insertions, and annotations over the course of centuries. As such it has thus far proved impossible to reconstruct definitively the original text.³⁵

Table 1 shows that there are at least a dozen misspellings of proper names in the extant manuscripts in the section on Alexander’s Central Asian campaigns. The first column indicates the passage in which the name appears. The second indicates the corrective along with the name of the editor whose text Lucarini, the editor of the Teubner 2009 edition of the *Historiae*, adopted.³⁶ The last three columns contain the variant(s) that appears in different codices. Although some misspellings are rather easy to correct, such as Maracada[m] (VII 6.24 [619]), Nauta<ca> (VIII 2.19 [181]), e<t M>ardos (VIII 3.17 [287]), Drangarum (VIII 3.17 [289]), and Gazaba/Gazaca (VIII 4.1 [294]), there is at least one occurrence in which the tradition completely fails necessitating a wholesale revision: Aldus (VIII 4.21 [346]) substituted Oxyartes for Cohortandus (Schachermayr substituted Chorienes). Other problems while serious can still be resolved based on context and in consultation with other passages in the text, or with the works of other authors. For example, Sogdianis is preferred over Susianis (VII 5.19 [471]), Maracanda instead of Marupenta/Manupenta (VII 6.10 [568]), Tapuris rather than Taphiros/Taphiris/Thaphiris (VIII 3.17 [287]), Stasanor and not Tamsanor/Tamsonor (VIII 3.17 [289]), Stameni in favor of Ditameni/Deditameni (VIII 3.17 [291]), and thus Margianam in place of Marganiam/ Marginiam (VII 10.15 [919]).

In these examples all five of the manuscripts noted above have faulty readings, though their faulty readings may vary. The four editors – Bruno, Ortelius, Aldus, Zumpt – did their work with more information available to them than did the scribes of each codex whose

35 For a detailed discussion of the transmission of the *Historiae*, see Teubner edition 2009, vii–lxvii; and ROLFE, “Introduction” (n. 8), ix–xxxv for a concise overview.

36 Aldus (15th–16th century); Bruno, Ortelius, Glareus, and Modius (16th century); Freinsheim (17th century); Zumpt (19th century); and Heidicke (20th century).

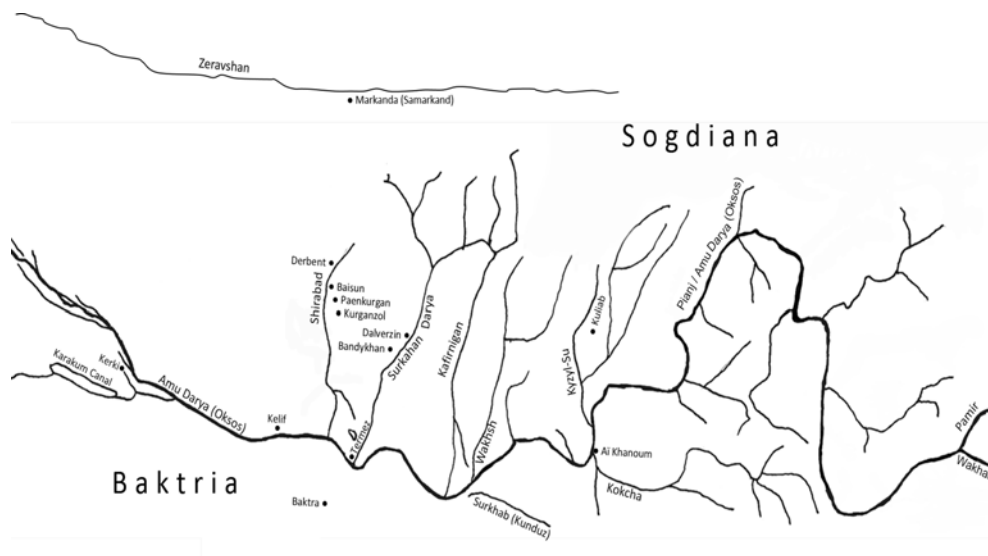
Citation	Teubner 2009	Variant 1	Variant 2	Variant 3
VII 5.19 (471)	Sogdianis] Freinsheim	Susianis] <i>consensus codicum significatur</i>		
VII 6.10 (568)	Maracanda] Bruno	Marupenta] PBFL	Manupenta] V	
VII 6.24 (619)	Maracanda[m] Bruno			
VII 10.15 (919)	Margianam] Ortelius	Marganiam] PFLV	Marginiam] B	
VIII 2.19 (181)	Nauta<ca>] Glareus			
VIII 3.17 (287)	e<t M>ardos] Modius			
VIII 3.17 (287)	Tapuris] Aldus	Taphiros] P	Taphiris] P ^{corr} BF ^{corr} LV	Thaphiris] F
VIII 3.17 (289)	Drangarum] Freinsheim	Dramearum] <i>consensus codicum significatur</i> (d*ra-L)		
VIII 3.17 (289)	Stasanor] Aldus	Tamsanor] PFLV	Tamsonor] B	
VIII 3.17 (291)	Stameni] Zumpt	Ditameni] PFLV	Deditameni] B	
VIII 4.1 (294)	Gazaba] Gazaca Hedicke			
VIII 4.21 (346)	Oxyartes] Aldus	Cohortandus] <i>con- sensus codicum significatur</i>	Chorienes] Scha- chermeyr	

Table 1: Spelling variations of proper names in Curtius.

work they were correcting. When it comes to proper names, part of an editor's work is to draw on information beyond the manuscript tradition itself, because proper names are subject to corruption by scribes who are not familiar with the names. The findings indicate that

these five manuscripts consistently present problematic spellings of the names of people and/or places in this section of the *Historiae*. With this in mind, we can appreciate the emendation made by Ortelius in choosing Margianam over the nonsensical renderings of Marganiam and Marginiam (VII 10.15 [919]). Ortelius based his emendation on a keen understanding of the region's geography and *toponyms*. *Rather than accept marks on a page that are otherwise inexplicable and not attested anywhere else, he looked to Margiana as a place for which there is precedent and context and where Alexander might well have visited. Ortelius has provided a resolution that is no more controversial than for the other problematic proper names as emended by Bruno, Aldus, and Zumpt. Consequently, a compelling case can be made that Margiana in the oasis of Merv was indeed the place to which Alexander advanced before returning to Sogdiana in the early spring of 328 BC.*

In these examples all five of the manuscripts noted above have faulty readings, though their faulty readings may vary. The four editors – Bruno, Ortelius, Aldus, Zumpt – did their work with more information available to them than did the scribes of each codex whose work they were correcting. When it comes to proper names, part of an editor's work is to draw on information beyond the manuscript tradition itself, because proper names are subject to corruption by scribes who are not familiar with the names. The findings indicate that these five manuscripts consistently present problematic spellings of the names of people and/or places in this section of the *Historiae*. With this in mind, we can appreciate the emendation made by Ortelius in choosing Margianam over the nonsensical renderings of Marganiam and Marginiam (VII 10.15 [919]). Ortelius based his emendation on a keen understanding of the region's geography and *toponyms*. *Rather than accept marks on a page that are otherwise inexplicable and not attested anywhere else, he looked to Margiana as a place for which there is precedent and context and where Alexander might well have visited. Ortelius has provided a resolution that is no more controversial than for the other problematic proper names as emended by Bruno, Aldus, and Zumpt. Consequently, a compelling case can be made that Margiana in the oasis of Merv was indeed the place to which Alexander advanced before returning to Sogdiana in the early spring of 328 BC.*



Map 1: Oksos River Valley.

4 The Fortresses of Paenikurgan³⁷ and Kurganzol

Curtius (VII 10.15–16) reports that six fortresses were founded near Margiana on high hills, two facing south and four facing east. They were spaced close enough to one another so that each might be able to offer assistance to another should the need arise.³⁸ For Sverchkov this passage means that the location of these urban strongholds as well as the founding of the city of Margania/Marginia should be identified not as the city of Margiana in the Turkmenistan oasis of Merv, but as a city located in the vicinity of Bandykhan near

37 I have adopted the spelling employed by Abdullaev (e.g., K.A. АБДУЛЛАЕВ, “Эллинические мотивы в терракотовой пластике Паенкурмана [северная Бактрия]”, *История материальной культуры Узбекистана* 30 [1999]; K.A. АБДУЛЛАЕВ, “К атрибуции тронных изображений в кушанской коропластике [по материалам крепости Паенкурмана Северной Бактрии]”, *VDI* 2000/2 [2000]; K.A. АБДУЛЛАЕВ, “Аск из Паёнкурмана: К вопросу о греческих формах в керамике Бактрии”, *История материальной культуры Узбекистана* 32 [2001]; K.A. АБДУЛЛАЕВ, “Работы Байсунского отряда на Паенкурмане в 2001 году”, *Археологические исследования в Узбекистане – 2001 год* 2002 [2002]; K.A. АБДУЛЛАЕВ, “Археологические работы в Паенкурмане в 2003 году [Бойсунский район Сурхандарьинская область]”, *Археологические исследования в Узбекистане – 2003 год* 4 [2004]) for the name of the stronghold, Paenikurgan, over the alternative spelling of Poenikurgan used by Sverchkov.

38 “Circa eam VI oppidis condendis electa sedes est, duo ad meridiem versa, III spectantia orientem; modicis inter se spatiis distabant, ne procul repetendum esset mutuum auxilium. Haec Omnia sita sunt in editis collibus. Tunc velut freni domitarum gentium, nunc originis suae oblita, serviunt quibus imperaverunt” (VII 10.15–16).

the Iron Gates in Uzbekistan. In support of this location, he proposes that two of the six fortresses mentioned by Curtius have been excavated in this region (see Map 1). Aduallaeв has published a series of publications about the results of his excavations of the Kushan fortress of Paenkurgan situated on the right bank of the Baisun, some 5 km south of the city of Baisun with layers that in five cryptic sentences he speculates might date to the 4th–3rd century BC.³⁹ Elsewhere Sverchkov has himself published widely on the circular-shaped fortress of Kurganzol, which he excavated and dates its foundation in the 4th–3rd century BC. The stronghold is located 7 km south of Paenkurgan and is likewise situated on the right bank of the Baisun.

The notion that each site was founded by Alexander as part of his campaign in the spring of 328 BC suffers from an array of problems, not least of which is that excavators have only been able to derive a relative – as opposed to absolute – chronology of his respective fortress. In the case of Paenkurgan, Abdullaev claims that the site dates from Alexander's campaign, even though he has found no evidence to warrant such an idea. The earliest material that he has unearthed are ceramics that are grey in color and adobe bricks (40–41 x 40–41 x 10–11 cm) which he dates not to Alexander but to the late stage of the Greek Baktrian or early Yuezhi period.⁴⁰ Unfortunately, merely stating that the site dates to Alexander's campaign does not make it a fact. Moreover, there is nothing found at the site that can in fact be identified as belonging to a period earlier than the mid-second century BC. Its foundation must, therefore, coincide with the transitional period in which political hegemony of the region changed from Greek Baktrian to nomadic. The characteristics of this period have long been formulated by Gardin that seems conveniently to have been overlooked. He set forth an honest appraisal of the cultural remains – primarily ceramics – found in the Baktrian context. Gardin noted that the material remains of the period of transition is far too murky to discern, especially as Greek types continued to be produced well into the Kushan era and even beyond. To date no satisfactory methodology has yet been devised that allows researchers precisely to distinguish one group (ethnically, culturally, or politically) from the next, particularly when all that is left are scant remnants of material culture; after all, forms can easily be borrowed from one group to the next without revealing the identity of their inheritors.⁴¹ Ironically, this is the same argument that Abdullaev

39 К.А. АБДУЛЛАЕВ, “Раскопки на Паенкургане в Байсунском районе (Северная Бактрия)”, *Археологические исследования в Узбекистане в 2000 год (2001)*, 28, 29. In all other publications (see n. 37) the emphasis based on the material excavated at the site – including this article – is focused on establishing the site as a Kushan fortress.

40 See, for example, АБДУЛЛАЕВ, “Раскопки” (n. 39), 28–29; АБДУЛЛАЕВ, “Работы” (n. 37), 17–18; followed by Л.М. СВЕРЧКОВ, “Эллинистическая крепость Курганзол”, in: К.А. Абдуллаев (ed.), *Материалы по античной культуре Узбекистана*, Samarkand 2005, 84–85, 97–98; Л.М. СВЕРЧКОВ, “Опыт синхронизации керамических комплексов эпохи эллинизма (Кампыртепа, Термез, Джигатеп, Курганзол)”, *Материалы Тохаристанской экспедиции. Археологические исследования Кампыртепа и Шортена*, 5 (2006), 105–124; Л.М. СВЕРЧКОВ, “Эллинистическая крепость Курганзол. Раскопки 2004 г.”, *Труды Байсунской научной экспедиции: археология, история, и этнография*, 3 (2007), 35–36, 59; SVERCHKOV, “Kurganzol” (n. 5), 127–134, 185; СВЕРЧКОВ, *Курганзол* (n. 18), 133–135 with n. 94, 147.

41 J.-C. GARDIN, *Prospections archéologiques en Bactriane orientale (1974–1978) sous la direction de J.-Cl. Gardin*, III: *Descriptions des sites et notes de synthèse*, Paris 1998, 162–180; cf. СВЕРЧКОВ, *Курганзол* (n. 18), 7–8.

himself has made about *askos* that was found at the site, which he dates to the second century BC at the earliest. In this case, the Paenkurgan *askos* reveals how Greek pottery underwent numerous cultural changes peculiar to Central Asia.⁴²

Kurganzol⁴³ is divided into four periods of occupation (KZ-1 to KZ-4), which Sverchkov dates as a period covering a little more than a century and a half from the end of the fourth century BC to the first half of the second century BC (KZ-4).⁴⁴ Unfortunately, the dates that he assigns to each of the four periods suffer from a number of methodological problems. For example, he makes the strange assertion that the pale-slipped ceramics of period KZ-1 of Kurganzol are without parallel, save those that are hand-molded from numerous sites dated to a variety of periods. He overlooks, however, that similar vessels have been found at Aï Khanoum attributed to periods I–III, ranging in date from the end of the fourth to the third quarter of the third century BC. Similarly, he proposes that period KZ-2 corresponds to the “transitional period” at Dzhi gatepa, typified by the appearance of red and black slips which Pidaev dates to the end of the fourth or beginning of the third century BC. Sverchkov, however, prefers dating this period to 280–250 BC based on the antiquated dating system employed by Guillaume for the *propylaea* at Aï Khanoum. Moreover, he dates the pottery in black slip at Kurganzol to the same period when similar pottery, including mold made bowls, emerge at Aï Khanoum, but rather than dating them to the second half of the second century BC as one would expect, he instead prefers a date somewhere in the third century BC well before they could possibly have been disseminated into the region. This has led others to propose that Period KZ-1 of Kurganzol should be readjusted to the *post*-Alexander era to coincide either with the rule of the Diadochi, the early Seleukids (perhaps in connection with the campaigns of the Seleukid general, Demodamas of Miletos), or even the Greek Baktrians.⁴⁵

5 Rapin and Ptolemy

Rapin has supplemented his work on Alexander’s itinerary in Central Asia with studies devoted to the region’s ‘chorography,’ as they appear principally in the *Geography* of Klaudios Ptolemaios.⁴⁶ His focus is on identifying modern place names with their ancient

42 АБДУЛЛАЕВ, “Аск из Паёнкургана” (n. 37), 79–80.

43 See L.M. SWERTSCHKOW, “Die Grabungen im Fort Kurgansol im Süden Usbekistans – neue Daten zur Geschichte Zentralasiens am Ende des 4. Jhs. v. Chr.,” in: S. Hansen, A. Wiczorek and M. Tellenbach (Hrsgs.), *Alexander der Grosse und die Öffnung der Welt. Asiens Kulturen im Wandel*, Manheim 2009 and СВЕРЧКОВ, *Курганзол* (n. 18) for photos of the site and its remains.

44 Л.М. СВЕРЧКОВ, “Байсун. Опыт исторической реконструкции”, *Труды Байсунской научной экспедиции*, 2 (2005), 44–55; СВЕРЧКОВ, “Kurganzol” (n. 5), 127–134, 162–165. For the most recent analysis of the site’s chronology, see СВЕРЧКОВ, *Курганзол* (n. 18), especially 7–17, 151–152.

45 E.g., J.D. LERNER, “Revising the Chronologies of the Hellenistic Colonies of Samarkand–Marakanda (Afrasiab II–III) and Aï Khanoum (northeastern Afghanistan)”, *Anabasis: Studia Classica et Orientalia*, 1 (2010), 73–75; M.J. OLBRYCHT, “Iranians in the Diadochi Period”, in: V.A. Troncoso and E.M. Anson (eds.), *After Alexander: The Time of the Diadochi (323–281 BC)*, Oxford 2013, 172.

46 C. RAPIN, “L’incompréhensible Asie centrale de la carte de Ptolémée: Propositions pour un decodage”, *Bulletin of the Asia Institute* 12 (1998), 201–225; RAPIN, “Afghanistan” (n. 12), 143–149, 164; cf. GRENET and RAPIN, “Alexander” (n. 12); S. GORSHENINA and C. RAPIN, *De Kaboul à Samarcande: les archéologiques en Asie central*, Paris 2001, 144–145; RAPIN, “On the way” (n. 20), passim for the same methodology applied in a different context.

counterparts that appear in Ptolemaios' tables. His basic premise is that by arranging the work into a series of sections, or paragraphs, one is better able to comprehend regional sets of coordinates, according to their longitude and latitude. However, since Western Central Asia was unfamiliar to Ptolemaios, he did not realize the full extent to which the information he had was corrupt. Rapin's idea is to unravel this 'Gordian Knot' of unintelligible data into separate, comprehensible strands. This requires a thoroughgoing revision of the text as it pertains primarily to Baktria and Sogdiana. He, therefore, proposes to manipulate the data through juxtaposition among other operations (*opérations et manipulations sur les cartes originales*) once the toponyms have been fixed on a map.⁴⁷ Following this process, Rapin then proceeds to perform a series of operations, such as rotating the map in various directions (*rotations, adaptations de l'échelle, ajouts visuels*) until he has achieved the desired effect: a corrected map that enables him to identify the various place names that appear on it, including those locations which appear in two places under different names, with their modern appellations (*positionnements après rotation et translations de la carte de Ptolémée*). This revised map then serves as a template by which the place names that appear on other maps of later periods can be understood.⁴⁸ For example, he sees in modern Termez, or more precisely "zone de Termez," the location of Alexandria Oxiana of Ptolemaios as well as Margania-Marginia, Antiochia, and Tarmita as it was presumably called at different times on other maps or in various texts. The same holds true for other places, like the city of Aī Khanoum, which Rapin identifies in Ptolemaios' tables as the cities of Eukratidia and Ostobara/Oskobara. In other words, Rapin considers them as "doublets": the names not of two different locales, but the same city known by two different names.

The reason that Rapin has been able to have his system work as well as it does is due to the fact that he has forced Ptolemaios' catalogue to conform to his own preconceptions of the region as it existed in antiquity. He also presupposes that all the relevant sites that appear in the tables have been found and identified, even though no site yet excavated has ever yielded any find indicating its ancient name, Greek or otherwise. It is well known that Ptolemaios (*Geog.* I 19.1) drew "on a patchwork of older and often imperfect sources" for his map of Asia.⁴⁹ Aside from the evident problems with using sources like Marinus of

47 See, e.g., I. RONCA, *Ptolemaios. Geographie 6,9–21: Ostiran und Zentralasien. Griechischer Text neu herausgegeben und ins Deutsche übertragen*, Rome 1971.

48 In his study of orography in Ptolemaios' Xinjiang, É. DE LA VAISSIÈRE, ("The triple system of orography in Ptolemy's Xinjiang", in: W. Sundermann, A. Hintze and F. de Blois (eds.), *Exegisti monumenta. Festschrift in honour of Nicholas Sims-Williams*, Wiesbaden 2009, 527–535) claims to have reproduced Rapin's methodology, but beyond merely stating that he has done so, it is difficult to see how he has implemented it. On the other hand, A. STÜCKELBERGER ("Ptolemy and the problem of scientific perception of space", in: R. Talbert and K. Brodersen (eds.), *Space in the Roman world*, Münster 2004, 39) initially accepted Rapin's approach as he expressed it in the publication of 1998, but on further reflection he has withdrawn his support as he has grown skeptical of the results that Rapin obtained "for equalizing the geodetic coordinates" (in correspondence). The complexity of this issue is not limited to Central Asia, similar difficulties are encountered, for example, with Germania and the island of Thule, A. KLEINEBERG, *Germania und die Insel Thule: die Entschlüsselung von Ptolemaios' "Atlas der Oikumene"*, Darmstadt 2010, 3–7, 14–15 et passim.

49 O.A.W. DILKE, "The culmination of Greek cartography in Ptolemy", in: J.B. Harley and D. Woodward (eds.), *Cartography in Prehistoric, Ancient, and Medieval Europe and the Mediterranean*, Chicago/London 1987, 198; cf. STÜCKELBERGER, "Ptolemy" (n. 48), 32.

Tyre who employed the accounts of merchants and other travelers in which he converted days of travel by land or sea into stadia, Ptolemaios also employed the practice of capriciously lessening the number of stadia when he thought them disproportionate.⁵⁰ Moreover, maps produced from Ptolemaios' tables, or any other map from antiquity for that matter, lack standards and North as a point of reference is not always assured. In principle, these defects could understandably produce errors, such as the displacement of entire sections. Rapin's random manipulations and indiscriminate "turns" of certain portions of Ptolemaios' map can and do allow one to arrive at a realistic geographical image. But this can only be achieved, because Rapin has anticipated the result and construed it from the desired rotation.⁵¹

This is particularly evident with the identification of Termez. Leriche, the director of the MAFOuz excavations of Northern Baktria, especially at Termez, took issue with a number of the arguments advanced by Grenet and Rapin based on archaeological evidence recovered from the site, topography, and philology. He emphatically maintains that Termez could not have been Margania/Marginia, or Alexandria Oxiana, or indeed have any association with Margiana. As such, there is no evidence that the site appears in any of the historical accounts of Alexander's campaign. Instead he cautions that it is best to await further evidence from Termez before rushing to any judgment.⁵² For their part, Grenet and Rapin agreed not to continue identifying Termez as Margania, although they remain adamant that the site was Alexandria Oxiana and Antioch Tarmita.⁵³ Although Rapin at first accepted Sverchkov's placement of Margania/Marginia at the site of Bandykhan II,⁵⁴ he is now inclined to locate it somewhere north or south of Bandykhan.⁵⁵ Clearly, if Rapin's method had truly worked, there would have been no reason to keep moving this city from one locale to the next.

In any event, in antiquity the orientation of maps was not as arbitrary and as manipulated as what Rapin does: in Ptolemaios' era the earth was represented under a coordinate grid system in the sky "in which the meridians were to be drawn as straight lines from a theoretical point (not the North Pole) and the parallels as arcs of a circle with the same point as a center."⁵⁶ In other words, the earth was assumed to be on a northern alignment,

50 For an examination of the problems and implications posed by reconstructing the route taken by the merchant Maes and his agents as related by Marinus and used by Ptolemaios, see J.D. LERNER, "Ptolemy and the Silk Road: from Baktra Basileion to Sera Metropolis", *East and West* 48 (1998).

51 For a succinct overview, see KLEINEBERG, *Germania* (n. 48), 7–14, 115–119.

52 LERICHE, "Termez" (n. 16), 411–415; cf. SVERCHKOV, "Kurganzol" (n. 5), 170 with n. 52 who agrees with Leriche that the archaeological remains from Termez do not substantiate the claim that it had been Alexandria Oxiana.

53 RAPIN, BAUD, GRENET and RAKHMANOV, "Recherches" (n. 17), 48–50. The identification of Termez as Alexandria Oxiana is far from certain; see e.g., the recent proposal of ПТВЕЛАДЗЕ, "К истории" (n. 17), 189–190, who argues that Kampyr-tepa should bear this distinction.

54 СВЕРЧКОВ, "Александр" (n. 18), 191–193; SVERCHKOV, "Kurganzol" (n. 5), 170–173.

55 RAPIN, "On the way" (n. 20), 57.

56 DILKE, "Culmination" (n. 49), 185; see also J. EVANS, *The History and Practice of Ancient Astronomy*, New York/Oxford 1998, 102–104; J. L. BERGGREN and A. JONES *Ptolemy's Geography: An Annotated Translation of the Theoretical Chapters*, Princeton/Oxford 2000, 31–41; R.L. COOKE, *The History of mathematics: a brief course*, 3rd ed., Hoboken, New Jersey 2013, 177–189; В.А. БРОНШТЭН, *Клавдий Птолемей: II век н.э.*, Moscow 1988, 145–147. Through no fault of his own, Ptolemaios' values for

similar to Artemidoros' Papyrus and the Peutinger Table. The longitudes and latitudes used by Ptolemaios, however, are affected by error, particularly the longitudes which are highly distorted because many of the localities were not identified with a reasonable degree of certainty, while whole regions, especially those in Asia with which Ptolemaios was most unfamiliar, suffer greatly. Consequently, Rapin's approach is simply not trustworthy, because it is too reliant on the preconceptions of its author and not on the evidence with which we have to work.

6 The Western Route

Those who espouse that Alexander took a western route to reach Sogdiana regard the accounts of Arrian and Curtius as generally similar. Alexander spent the winter of 329–328 BC in Zariaspa/Baktra (Arr. *An.* IV 7.1; Curt. VII 10.10), during which time he resolved to send Bessos to Ekbatana to receive punishment (Arr. *An.* IV 7.3; Curt VII 10.10) and he received reinforcements (Arr. *An.* IV 7.1; Curt VII 10.11–12). Arrian and Curtius are likewise in agreement about the events that transpired in early spring 328 BC: Alexander left Baktra for the Oksos (Arr. *An.* IV 15.7; Curt. VII 11.13), where on the banks of the river according to Arrian (*An.* IV 15.7–8) two sources of water and oil were discovered near Alexander's tent, while Curtius (VII 10.14) knows of only water that was directly found inside of it. They diverge, however, in two important respects. Prior to Alexander's departure from the country, an insurrection occurred. According to Arrian (*An.* IV 16.1), Alexander ordered several of his generals to quash the rebellion, while Curtius credits the suppression to Alexander himself (VII 10.13). Most significant, Arrian has Alexander leave Bactria directly for Sogdiana (*An.* IV 15–16.7), unlike Curtius, who has Alexander reach Sogdiana (VII 11.1) by way of Margiana. The reason that Arrian has left out this important episode is according to Bosworth due to the fact that Arrian deviates from his chronological narrative by inserting the internal conflicts that beset Alexander's army in Central Asia: the death of Kleitos, the Kallisthenese affair, and the conspiracy of the Royal Pages (*An.* IV 8.1–14.4).⁵⁷ In the course of relating these episodes, Arrian twice indicates a violation of the chronological principle of his presentation (*An.* IV 8.1; IV 14.4). Curtius, on the other hand, mentions that Alexander crossed the Okhos River on his march to Margiana, which is key to the campaign's location.⁵⁸ Moreover, Pliny's account (*Nat.* VI 18,47) of Alexander's foundation of Margiana supports Curtius' narrative as do those of Martianus Capella (VI 691) and Solinus (48.3) with only the minor difference of its subsequent refounding as either a Seleukia or an Antiochia.

Curtius' (VII 10.10–11.1) account of Alexander having made the 350 km trek west of Baktra to the city of Margiana in present day Merv which he renamed after himself occurred within the administrative limits of the Baktrian satrapy prior to his march into Sogdiana.⁵⁹ The six towns or strongholds constructed near Margiana, mentioned by Curtius,

latitude were off by as much as 2°, while his calculations for longitude suffered even more and would remain problematic until the invention of the chronometer toward the end of the eighteenth century (R.S. LOVE, *Maritime Exploration in the Age of Discovery, 1415–1800*, Westport/ London 2006, 130).

57 BOSWORTH, "Missing" (n. 9), 23–29; Bosworth, *Historical* (n. 9), 108–117.

58 Cf. *Metz Epitome* (14).

59 Margiana had been administered as part of the satrapy of Bactria at least since the reign of Darios I: Г.А. КОШЕЛЕНКО, А.Н. БАДЕР and В.А. ГАЙБОВ, "Маргиана в ахеменидской официальной

may well have been established on artificial hills called *tepes* or *tepas*, which was commonly practiced in the region.⁶⁰ As for the rivers that Alexander crossed, the Oksos' identification as the Amu Darya is well known. The identity of the Okhos, however, is problematic and central to understanding Curtius' account (VII 10.15–16; cf. *Metz Epitome* 14) of Alexander's march to Margiana.

The Okhos in a number of accounts is variously located in western Bactria where it was also called the Oksos.⁶¹ The Okhos that Alexander crossed is one of a number of possible rivers: the Kunduz that flows into the Oksos, the Atrek that makes its way into the Caspian, the Hari-rud or Tedzhen (Areios) or the Murghab (Margos) in Turkmenistan, the Kaisar River that flowed through the districts of Maimana and Andkhui and formed part of the Afghan-Turkestan network of rivers, and the Kelif Uzboi.⁶² Since none of Afghanistan's northern rivers (the Kaisar, Sari-i-Pul, or the Balkh-ab) are known to have joined the Oksos–Amu Darya in antiquity, there is only one alternative left, the Kelif Uzboi. This river originated as the result of the bifurcation of the middle Amu Darya and used to convey water from it through southern Turkmenistan to the Caspian.⁶³ Furthermore, this helps to explain why Strabon (XI 7.3–4; XI 11.5; cf. XI 9.2) always treats the Okhos as inseparable with the Oksos and allows him to distinguish the Okhos from the Arios (modern Tedzhen – Hari-rud).

From the middle of the ninth century BC to the fifteenth century CE, the climate in northwest Europe and southern Siberia underwent a significant change that resulted in conditions becoming wetter and more humid, turning semi-deserts into lush stepped landscapes.⁶⁴ By the eighth century BC Sarykamysch Lake, situated between the Caspian Sea

традиции”, *Проблемы истории, филологии, культуры* 2 (1995), 139–150; Г.А. КОШЕЛЕНКО, В.А. ГАИБОВ and А.Н. БАДЕР, “Парфянские сюжеты в *Истории Александра Македонского* Курция Руфа”, *VDI* 1998/1, 305.

60 A. HERRMANN, *Alte Geographie des unteren Oxusgebiets*, Berlin 1914, 30–35.

61 Str. XI 7.3–4 (509–510); XI 11.5 (518); Plin. *Nat.* VI 48 (47); Ptol. *Geog.* VI 11.2–4; Amm. Marc. XXIII 6.57–58. For a review of the pertinent literature, ХЛОПИН, *Историческая* (н. 9), 32–44, 150–152.

62 HERRMANN, *Alte Geographie* (n. 60), 31–35; cf. F.L. HOLT, *Alexander the Great and Bactria: The Formation of a Greek Frontier in Central Asia*, Leiden 1988, 24, 62, who vacillates on the subject.

63 Г.А. КОШЕЛЕНКО, В.А. ГАИБОВ and А.Н. БАДЕР, “О некоторых особенностях экологической ситуации в Мервском оазисе в древности и раннем средневековье”, *Проблемы истории, филологии, культуры*, 4/1 (1997), 63–69; Г.А. КОШЕЛЕНКО, В.А. ГАИБОВ and А.Н. БАДЕР, “Александр македонский в Маргиане”, *VDI* 2000/1, 7–11; M.J. OLBRYCHT, *Parthia et ultiores gentes. Die politischen Beziehungen zwischen dem arsakidischen Iran und den Nomaden der eurasischen Steppen*, Munich 1998, 51–6; M.J. OLBRYCHT, “The Ochros River in the Classical Sources: A Study in the Historical Geography of Northeastern Iran and Middle Asia”, in: T. Mkrtycheva (ed.), *Tsentralnaya Aziya. Istochniki, istoriya, kul'tura*, Moscow 2003, 114–117; M. J. OLBRYCHT, *Aleksander Wielki i świat irański*, Rzeszów 2004, 213–217; M. J. OLBRYCHT, “Some Remarks on the Rivers of Central Asia in Antiquity”, in: T. N. Jackson, I. G. Kononova and G. R. Tsatskheladze (eds.), *Gaudeamus Igitur: Studies to Honor the 60th Birthday of A.V. Podossinov*, Moscow 2010, 302–309 wherein the author offers a concise overview of the problem presented by the ancient sources along with its resolution. Contra И.В. ПЯНКОВ, *Средняя Азия в античной географической традиции: Источниковедческий анализ*, Moscow 1997, 234–259, 268–269, 284 who is dismissive of the Kelif Uzboi.

64 B. VAN GEEL, N.A. BOKOVENKO, N.D. BUROVA, K.V. CHUGUNOV, V.A. DERGACHEV, V.G. DIRKSEN, M. KULKOVA, A. NAGLER, H. PARZINGER, J. VAN DER PLICHT, S.S. VASILIEV and G.I. ZAITSEVA, “The sun, climate change and the expansion of the Scythian culture after 850 BC”, in: E.M. Scott, A.Y. Alek-

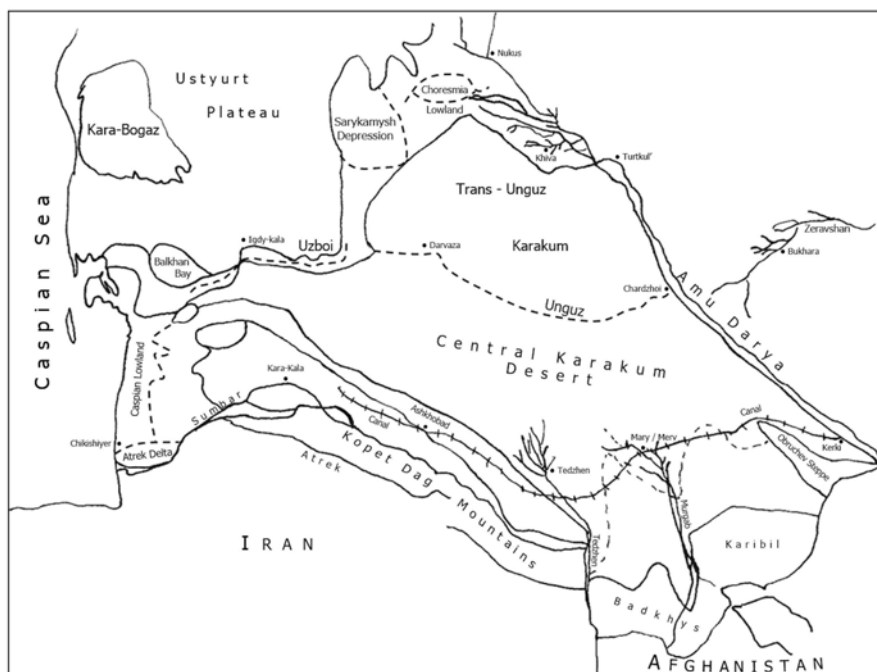
and the Aral Sea, emerged enabling intensive irrigation and led to the blossoming of Khorezm civilization. A similar climatic pattern has likewise been detected to the south in the Merv oasis.⁶⁵ At the same time, there was a regeneration of the steppe landscape with forests lining the banks of rivers and reservoirs as well as a growth in river valleys throughout the Karakum, such as the emergence of the Uzboi, the Unguz River, and the Kelif-Uzboi (see Map 2). In the last centuries leading to the Common Era, the Caspian Sea attained its maximum extent, causing vast territories in the Karakum to be inundated.⁶⁶ Between the second century BC and the first century CE, the Parthians at the mouth of the upper Uzboi established their most northerly fortress at Igdy-qala 36 m above the now dry bed measuring some 60 m wide and 2 m deep on the border of Khorezm in order to safeguard the lucrative commercial waterways from the west and south and the overland caravan routes from the north and east.⁶⁷ Other sites reveal that by the mid first millennium BC the banks of the lower Uzboi were peopled with various settlements.⁶⁸

seev and G. Zaitseva, (eds.), *Impact of the Environment on Human Migration in Eurasia*, Dordrecht/ London 2004, 151–158; cf. A.Y. ALEKSEEV, “Some chronological problems of European Scythia: archaeological and Radiocarbon”, in: E.M. Scott, A.Y. Alekseev and G. Zaitseva, (eds.), *Impact of the Environment on Human Migration in Eurasia*, Dordrecht/ London 2004, 9–19; N.A. BOKOVENKO, “Migrations of early nomads of the Eurasian steppe in a context of climatic change”, in: E.M. Scott, A.Y. Alekseev and G. Zaitseva, G. (eds.), *Impact of the Environment on Human Migration in Eurasia*, Dordrecht/ London 2004, 21–33; A. PAZDUR, “Archaeological cultures on the background of climatic changes in the Holocene, Poland”, in: E.M. Scott, A.Y. Alekseev and G. Zaitseva, (eds.), *Impact of the Environment on Human Migration in Eurasia*, Dordrecht/ London 2004, 309–321; N.G.O. BOROFFKA, H. OBERNHÄNSL, G.A. ACHATOV, N.V. ALADIN, K.M. BAIPAKOV, A. ERZHANOVA, A. HÖRNIG, S. KRIVONOGOV, D.A. LOBAS, T.V. SAVEL’EVA and B. WÜNNEMANN, “Human settlements on the northern shores of Lake Aral and water level changes”, *Migration and adaptation strategies for global change* 10/1 (2005), 77, 81–82; N.G.O. BOROFFKA, “Archaeology and its relevance to climate and water level changes: a review”, in: A.G. Kostianoy and A.N. Kosarev (eds.), *The Aral Sea Environment*, Berlin/ London 2010, 289–290, 294–295, 299. A concise overview that was in many respects ahead of its time is R.A. LEWIS, “Early Irrigation in West Turkestan”, *Annals of the Association of American Geographers* 56/3 (1966), particularly 472–478, 480–484, 487–489.

65 Г.А. КОШЕЛЕНКО, А.Г. ГУБАЕВ, В.А. ГАИБОВ и А.Н. БАДЕР, “Мервский оазис: динамика систем расселения и ирригации”, *VDI* 1994/4, 86–90. A similar weather pattern occurred in the Ferghana valley (N.G. GORBUNOVA, *The Culture of Ancient Ferghana: VI century BC – VI century A.D.*, Oxford 1986, 11–17; КОШЕЛЕНКО, ГАИБОВ и БАДЕР, “О некоторых” (н. 63), 64; В. МОКРЫНИН и В. ПЛОСКИХ, *Археология и история Кыргызстана. Избранное*, Bishkek 2010, 37–38, 49–52, 98–99, 142–147).

66 КОШЕЛЕНКО, ГАИБОВ и БАДЕР, “О некоторых” (н. 63), 64–65 who note that in the Hellenistic period the waters of the Caspian flooded two-thirds of the Precaspian lowlands in the north, northwest, and northeast, the Volga and Akhtuba – up to Volgograd – valleys, almost the entire Kura–Araksian lowland up to Erlakh, the western Turkmenistan lowland, and the Uzboi valley as far as the remains of Igdy.

67 The site may also have served as the capital of the Kidarites, known as Balkhan or Bolo-Balaam. Thus, В.Н. ПИЛИПКО, “Исследование античных памятников в Северной Парфии в 1970 г.”, *Каракумские древности* 4 (1972), 78–86; В.Н. ПИЛИПКО, “Памятники парфянского времени в районе Аннау (по материалам разведки 1970г.)”, *Известия Академии наук Туркменской ССР: Серия общественных наук*, 5 (1973), 60–64; Х.Ю. ЮСУПОВ, “О городе Балхан и гавани Ал-Бухейре”, *Известия Академии наук Туркменской ССР. Серия общественных наук*, 1 (1975), 69; В.Н. ПИЛИПКО, *Парфянское сельское поселение Гарры-Кяриз*, Ashgabat 1975, 78–98; Х.Ю. ЮСУПОВ, “Игды-кала – парфянская крепость на Узбое”, *Этнография и археология Средней Азии*, 1979, 53–58; Х.Ю. ЮСУПОВ, “Археологические



Map 2: Southern Turan with the Karakum Desert.

памятники Узбоя и проблема водного пути из Индии в Каспий”, in: В.М. Массон and Е. Атагаррьев (eds.), *Туркменистан в эпоху раннежелезного века*, Ashgabat 1984, 91–94; Х.Ю. ЮСУПОВ, *Древности Узбоя*, Ashgabat 1986, 154–207, esp. 181–194, 207; V.N. YAGODIN, “The Duana Archaeological Complex”, in: A.V.G. Betts and S. Blau, (eds.), *Ancient Nomads of the Aralo-Caspian Region: The Duana Archaeological Complex*, Leuven 2007, 51; *contra* F. GRENET, “Regional interaction in Central Asia and Northwest India in the Kidarite and Hephthalite”, in: N. Sims-Williams, (ed.) *Indo-Iranian Languages and Peoples*, Cambridge 2002, 211. B.I. Vainberg supposes that the fortress of Igdy-qala by the 4th century CE had ceased to exist (Б.И. ВАЙНБЕРГ, *Этнография Турана в древности, VII в. до н.э.–VIII в. н.э.*, Moscow 1999, 257); *cf.* Х.Ю. ЮСУПОВ, “Узбой в античное время в свете новых археологических данных”, *Известия Академии наук. Туркменской ССР. Серия общественных наук*, 6 (1976), 40–46; Б.И. ВАЙНБЕРГ, “История обводнения Присарыкамьшской дельты Амударьи в древности в свете археологических работ последних десятилетий”, in: *Аральский кризис (историко-географическая ретроспектива)*, Moscow 1991, 129–141.

- 68 Б.И. ВАЙНБЕРГ and Х.Ю. ЮСУПОВ, “Культовый комплекс древних скотоводов на Узбое”, in: *Культурные связи народов Средней Азии и Кавказа (древность и средневековье)*, Moscow 1990, 29–31.

In antiquity the Karakum Desert of Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan was a completely different landscape marked by immense forests along the Sarykamysh and Murghab valley. If Strabo's description of the region extending east of the Caspian Sea up to Margiana is correct, then in the Parthian period it was a semi-desert. An abundance of groundwater throughout the region provided numerous pastures for nomads and their horses, including the Parni, who in the mid-third century BC invaded the Seleukid satrapy of Parthia and founded the Arsakid, or Parthian kingdom.⁶⁹

The ancient Kelif Uzboi, or Kelif Darya, watered by the Amu Darya and the rivers of Afghanistan, was not connected to the Sarykamysh Uzboi. Originating at Chardzhoi, this channel forms the southernmost branch of the Amu Darya not far from the Hellenistic site of Mirzabek kala.⁷⁰ The channel is composed of a series of interconnected depressions or settling lakes, some of which measure 2,000 m in width and 3,000 m in length. When filled they appear from the surface to form a river. The Uzboi slopes in a westerly direction past the Murghab oasis making its way into the Caspian Sea by way of the bay of Balkhan, the same course followed generally by the Trans-Caspian Railway and the Karakum Canal.⁷¹

In addition to Curtius' account of Alexander's conquest of Margiana, Solinus (48.1–3), and Martianus Capella (VI 691) state that the city was subsequently renamed Seleukeia after its refounding by Seleukos I, while Pliny the Elder (*Nat.* VI 47), Isidoros (*FGrH* 781 F2 [14]), and Strabo (XI 10.2 [576]) claim that it was later only called Antiocheia after

69 For an overview of the early Arsakids, see OLBRYCHT, *Parthia* (n. 63), 51–76. J.D. LERNER, *The Impact of Seleucid Decline of the Eastern Iranian Plateau*, Stuttgart 1999, 13–31.

70 В.Н. ПИЛИПКО, *Поселения Северо-Западной Бактрии*, Ashgabat 1985, 47–60, 72–75, 177–178.

71 The historical importance of the Kelif Uzboi has formed the basis of an array of studies for well over a century; e.g., H.C. RAWLINSON, "The Road to Merv", *Proceedings of the Royal Geographical Society and Monthly Record of the Geography, new monthly series*, 1/3 (1879), 164, 180–181; R.W. PUMPELLE, "Physiography of Central-Asian Deserts and Oases", in: R.W. Pumpelly (ed.), *Explorations in Turkestan. Expedition of 1904: Prehistoric Civilizations of Anau: Origins, Growth, and Influence of Environment*, II, Washington 1908, 297; В.В. БАРТОЛЬД, *К истории орошения Туркменистана*, Saint Petersburg 1914, 8, 10, 13, 17, 20, 71; A. HERRMANN, "Gibt es noch ein Oxusproblem?", *Petermanns Geographische Mitteilungen* 76 (1930), 286–289; С.А. ВЯЗИГИН, "Реки Туркменистана по сведениям античных географов", *Известия Туркменского филиала АН СССР* 3–4 (1946), 38–41; О.М. ДЖУМАЕН, *К истории орошаемого земледелия в Туркменистане*, Ashgabat 1951, 34–43; М.Е. МАССОН, "Народы и области южной части Туркменистана в составе парфянского государства", in: М.Е. Массон (ed.), *Труды Южно-Туркменистанской археологической комплексной экспедиции*, V, Ashgabat 1955, 9; E. HUNTINGTON, "The historic fluctuations of the Caspian Sea", *Bulletin of the American Geographical Society* 39 (1907), 578–585; E. HUNTINGTON, *The Pulse of Asia: A Journey in Central Asia Illustrating the Geographical Basis of History*, Boston/New York 1907, 330–340; А.С. Кесъ and С.П. Толстов (eds.), *Низовья Амударьи, Сарыкамыш, Узбой. История формирования и заселения*, in: *Материалы Хорезмской экспедиции*, 3, Moscow 1960, 16–17 with figs. 2–4; P. DAFFINA, "Aral, Caspio, Tanais", *RSO* 43 (1968), 365–369. The best overviews of the sources remain B. SPULER, "Der Āmu Darjā. Eine Fluss-Monographie", in: J. Eckmann, A.S. Levend and M. Mansuroglu (eds.), *Mélanges Jean Deny*, Ankara 1958, particularly 236–246; Г.А. КОШЕЛЕНКО, А.Г. ГУБАЕВ, А.Н. БАДЕР and В.А. ГАЙБОВ, *Древний Мерв в свидетельствах письменных источников*, Ashgabat 1994, 17–45; Х.Ю. ЮСУПОВ, "Палеогеография Узбоя по историческим сведениям", *Проблемы освоения пустынь* 1995/2, 45–53. For a concise analysis of the inland waterways making it possible to sail from Central Asia to the Black Sea and back again, see J.D. LERNER, "On the Inland Water Ways from Europe to Central Asia", *Ancient West and East* 13 (2014), 155–174.

Antiochos I.⁷² Koshelenko, Gaibov, and Bader⁷³ see in these reports a circle of authors who provide independent confirmation about Alexander's activities in the Merv oasis and thus independently support Curtius' testimony. It is quite possible that Krateros was left behind to settle the arrangements of the affairs in Margiana for reasons of strategic expediency: to secure the most direct route from Bactria and Sogdiana to the west and to possess an outpost in the western part of Central Asia to keep the nomads in check, particularly the Massagetae led at that time by Spitamenes. And indeed it was here that after Alexander had left for his Sogdian campaign that Krateros defeated Spitamenes and his followers, who nonetheless managed to retreat back into the steppes (Curt. VIII 1.6; Arr. *An.* IV 17.1–2).

In terms of the six fortresses that Alexander is credited with having established, Curtius references the Parthians who at the time of his writing ruled Margina (VII 10.16). Koshelenko, Gaibov, and Bader propose that four of them were situated along the Kelif Uzboi (Okhos), while the other two may have been located on the banks of the Murghab south of the modern Merv oasis toward Takhta-Bazar and Kushki.⁷⁴ On the other hand, Cerasetti and her team, using multispectral ETM Landsat images from NASA Landsat Mosaic, have detected a line of seven fortresses crossing Merv in the Murghab delta. Each measures about 10 ha and are set at intervals of about 50 km (= 31 miles) along the Kelif Uzboi riverbed as part of the security afforded to travelers by caravan or ship. Based on their appearance from the images, the team suggests that the strongholds date to the Parthian period, but given that no excavations have been undertaken, it is not excluded that they were built on top of earlier ruins which might date back to Alexander's campaigns or even to the Achaemenid period.⁷⁵ The existence of these fortifications suggest that at different times the region was in fact provided with strongholds for its protection. Although the evidence is at present circumstantial, it is not excluded that the remains of other fortresses in the area will likewise be detected using similar methods. Finally, Olbrycht rightly notes that had Curtius' Margiana been located in Sogdiana, it would be nearly impossible to relate the founding of the *oppida* there, since the Parthians ruled this region only temporarily and were restricted to the Oksos valley.⁷⁶ Opinion is divided, however, as to the actual site that Alexander founded. Masson argued that Erk-kala served as the garrison, while Gaur-kala

72 L. ROBERT ("Documents d'Asie Mineure", *BCH* 108 (1984), 472) goes so far as to wonder if Demodamas of Miletos was involved in the city's refounding.

73 КОШЕЛЕНКО, ГАЙБОВ и БАДЕР, "Александр" (n. 63), 11–15; see F. SCHACHERMEYER, *Alexander der Grosse. Das Problem seiner Persönlichkeit und seines Wirkens*², Vienna 1973, 349 n. 416; cf. VON SCHWARZ, *Alexanders* (n. 2), 68–70. OLBRYCHT, *Aleksander* (n. 63), 211–213, who includes a discussion of the Iranian tradition of the city as a foundation of Alexander.

74 G. KOŠELENKO, A. BADER and V. GAIBOV, "Die Margiana in hellenistischer Zeit", in: B. Funck (ed.), *Hellenismus. Beiträge zur Erforschung von Akkulturation und politischer Ordnung in den Staaten des hellenistischen Zeitalters (Akten des Internationalen Hellenismus-Kolloquiums 9.–14. März 1994 in Berlin.)*, Tübingen 1996, 125–137.

75 B. CERASETTI, "Reasoning with GIS: Tracing the Silk Road and the Defensive Systems of the Murghab Delta (Turkmenistan)", *The Silk Road* 2/2 (2004), www.silk-road.com/newsletter/vol2num2/Reasoning.html, 40–41.

76 OLBRYCHT, *Aleksander* (n. 63), 217–221; E. V. RTVELADZE, "Parthians in the Oxus Valley. Struggle for the Great Indian Road", *Anabasis: studia classica et orientalia* 2 (2011), 151–165; Э.В. РТВЕЛАДЗЕ, *Великий индийский путь из истории важнейших торговых дорог Евразии*, Saint Petersburg 2012, 39–40, 63–74.

was the actual settlement of Alexander's colony.⁷⁷ For Koshelenko, Gaibov, and Bader Alexander's foundation was Erk-kala, unlike Olbrycht who maintains that Gaur-kala was the site, which was subsequently destroyed by nomads, only to return under Seleukos I and Antiochos I.⁷⁸

According to Bernard, when Alexander returned eastward he crossed the Oksos at some point between Kelif in the west and Termez in the east where he divided his troops into five columns according to the five leading tributaries on the right, or northern, bank of the middle Oksos from east to west: the Kyzyl-Su, Wakhsh/Surkhab, Kafirnigan, Surkhan Darya, and the Shirabad in Tajikistan and Uzbekistan, respectively.⁷⁹ Hephaestion commanded one division charged with pacifying the Surkhan Darya; Ptolemy, son of Lagus, the bodyguard, commanded a second with the task of subduing the Kafirnigan; Perdikkas was placed over the third and undertook the mission of clearing resistance along the Wakhsh/Surkhab; and Koinos and Artabazos led the fourth in the upper Oksos/Amu Darya; and Alexander himself commanded the fifth up the Sherabad to Marakanda. Along the way each division rid its respective territory of enemy held strongholds either by force or through negotiation (Arr. An. IV 16.1–3).⁸⁰ It was during this campaign that Curtius (VII 11.1–29) credits Alexander with the capture of the rock of Ariamazes. In this manner when the army reunited at Marakanda, the greater part of Sogdiana had been conquered (Arr. An. IV 16.1–3). Using Marakanda as their base of operations, Alexander again divided the army, but this time into three columns: Hephaestion was assigned one division with the task of planting settlements in various towns, while Koinos and Alexander each had their own column and spent much of the season chasing down various rebels, including Spitamenes, the capture of the district of Bazaira and Xenippa on the Skythian border where Baktrian refugees had sought safety (Arr. An. IV 16.3–5; Curt. VIII 1 –2.18). The year closed with Alexander spending the winter of 328–327 BC in the Sogdian city of Nautaka (Arr. An. IV 18.1; Curt. VIII 2.19).

77 M.E. МАССОН, “Новые данные по древней истории Мерва”, *VDI* 1951/4, 93.

78 G. KOSHELENKO, V. GAIBOV and A. BADER, “Evolution of the settlement patterns in the Merv oasis (Turkmenistan) from Alexander the Great to Arab conquest”, in: *Convegno internazionale sul tema La Persia e l'Asia Centrale de Alessandro al X secolo in collaborazione con l'Istituto italiano per il Medio ed Estremo Oriente (Roma, 9–12 novembre 1994)*, Rome 1996, 308; OLBRYCHT, *Aleksander* (n. 63), 221–222.

79 P. BERNARD, “Alexandre et l'Asie central: reflexions à propos d'un ouvrage de F.L. Holt”, *Studia Iranica* 19 (1990), especially 25–28. Initially, Bernard disagreed with Bosworth's proposal, although in the course of doing so he abandoned his earlier argument that Ai Khanoum might have been in Sogdiana – not Baktria – and had served as an administrative capital for the region south of the Oksos and east of the Kokcha (BERNARD and FRANCFORT, *Études* (n. 12), 5–9, 14–15); instead, he now asserts that the city is in fact situated in eastern Baktria (BERNARD, “Alexandre” (n. 11), 125–138). Naturally, BOSWORTH, *Historical* (n. 9), 108–119 remained convinced of his original argument.

80 These assignments are opposite those of GRENET and RAPIN, “Alexander” (n. 12), 81–83 as they have the army marching from the east, not from the west. The nature of the campaign in Baktria and Sogdiana was until Alexander's marriage to Roxane in the spring of 327 BC, according to М.Я. ОЛЬБРИХТ, “Политика Александра Македонского в отношении Иранцев в Средней Азии (329–327 гг. до н.э.)”, *Metamorphoses of History Scientific Almanac* 4 (2013), 123–126, one of terror committed by the Makedonians against the native population.

7 Conclusion

In closing, the eastern route proposed for Alexander's march northward remains unconvincing. There is no need to revise the geopolitical and cultural history of the region. The Surkhab/Wakhsh cannot be regarded as the headwaters of the Oksos/Amu Darya and thus the border between Sogdiana in the west and northern Bactria in the east. Likewise there is nothing to warrant the supposition that at the time of Alexander's anabasis the Piandzh was called the Okhos and thereby considered a river separate from the Oksos/Amu Darya, and it most certainly did not divide eastern Bactria north and south. The same holds true for the notion that Aī Khanoum was somehow an important administrative center in eastern Bactria whose authority extended north of the Oksos. While it was certainly significant, there is nothing that suggests its political influence extended north of Bactria. Nor can we accept that it was called Oskobara/Ostobara and Eukratideia and that the river Kokcha was the called the Dargoidos of Ptolemaios. Unfortunately, the link between Paenkurgan and Kur-ganzol as Alexander foundations while promising at first glance is upon closer analysis based on mistaken conjecture. Finally, there is no need to invent a Sogdian city called Margina or Margana as both are simply the misspellings of the name of Margiana. Its proposed locations first at Termez, then at Bandykhan, and now somewhere else continue to change because the city never existed and the quest to find it amounts to little more than a quixotic undertaking.

The Massacre of the Branchidae: A Reassessment. The *post-mortem* Case in Defence of the Branchidae*

Olga Kubica (Wrocław)

1 Proposed form of the narrative

The story of the massacre of the Branchidae is transmitted as an episode in the history of Alexander. As reported by Curtius Rufus,¹ the Branchidae, who had been settled in Sogdiana by Xerxes, surrendered to the Macedonian ruler, yet he butchered them all and destroyed their city in revenge for the treason of their forefathers. The original source of this story was Callisthenes, who was favourable to Alexander.² However, such a perspective is not very favourable for the Branchidae, because it deprived the victims of the right to a fair judgment. Probably we will never know how things looked from their perspective.

Vlassopoulos in his book pointed to the fact that the Greek history has been written as a history of the torch bearers of the Western civilisation.³ He showed how such an approach resulted in a silencing of certain alternatives and forming a modern orthodoxy. He explained how we need to change our approach to writing history by populating our histories with real people and their different and divergent experiences in order to convey the multiplicity of perspectives, temporalities, levels and processes. He postulated two forms of narrative: the travel narrative and the invented speech. The democratisation of the speech form is, in his opinion, intended to give a voice to those who have been denied one.⁴ Therefore, a special form of the invented speech, namely the judicial speech, has been used in this article in order to give voice to the Branchidae and to enable considering the case in *utramquem partem*.

On the other hand, in contemporary historical research an increased interest in ethnic groups and minorities can be observed. Therefore, the second part of the article is devoted to the ethnic origin of the Branchidae, who had been disadvantaged not only by the lack of a fair trial, but also by the lack of their own history and memory. This part is not directly related to the defence of the Branchidae, but it is an attempt to redress their memory. In this

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1 Curt. VII 5.28–35.

2 Cf. K. NAWOTKA, *Alexander the Great*, Newcastle upon Tyne 2010, 273.

3 K. VLASSOPOULOS, *Unthinking the Greek Polis: Ancient Greek history beyond Eurocentrism*, Cambridge 2007.

4 VLASSOPOULOS, *Unthinking* (n. 3), 238.

context, the theory of Wilamowitz-Moellendorff about the relationship between Didyma and Cybele Dindymene has been reconsidered.

2 The *post-mortem* case in defence of the Branchidae

If we were to proceed with a defence of the Branchidae using modern judicial standards, first we would need to ask about the charges. As reported in the Greek sources, the Branchidae were allegedly guilty of betrayal (προδοσία) and temple-robbery (ιεροσυλία).⁵ The sentence announced and being immediately executed by Alexander was their death and complete destruction of their city. Secondly, it needs to be asked who is who in this case? At first glance, Alexander seems to be both prosecutor and executioner. However, we learn about his accusations and actions against the Branchidae not at first-hand, but from later testimonies.⁶ Meanwhile, the archaeological traces may indicate that these testimonies are not entirely true and that the Branchidae were not utterly destroyed.⁷ Another question concerns the accused; namely, whether the accused were the Branchidae or their descendants who expiated the guilt of their forefathers.⁸ The role of the Milesians in this trial is also difficult to define. Essentially it was their ancestors who were mainly affected by the betrayal of the Didymaeans priests and, as we read in Curtius Rufus,⁹ they harboured old hatred against the clan of the Branchidae. However, when Alexander allowed them to decide on the fate of the Branchidae, their voices were divided.

On the other hand, if we actually considered the case in accordance with modern standards, Alexander would have been prosecuted for genocide, which is defined by Sémelin as “that particular process of civilian destruction that is directed at the total eradication of a group, the criteria by which it is identified being determined by the perpetrator.”¹⁰ Clearly the massacre of the Branchidae was not justifiable either as self-defence or as *casus belli*. According to the modern evaluation of genocide only the subaltern genocide, or “genocide by the oppressed” can be justified.¹¹ As stated by Jones,

“Apart from cases of subaltern genocide, the defenders and deniers of some of history’s worst genocides often justify killing on the grounds of *legitimate defensive or retributory action against traitors and subversives*.”¹²

However, from the ancient testimonies it follows that in ancient times the deed of Alexander was evaluated quite differently than today. According to Curtius Rufus,¹³ it would seem to have been a just vengeance (*iusta ultio*) and not cruelty (*crudelitas*), if it had been de-

5 Str. XI 11.4.

6 Str. XVII 1.43 (cf. Callisth. *FGrH* 124 F14); D.S. XVII κ; Curt. VII 5.28–35; Plu. *Mor.* 557b; *Suid.*, s.v. Βραγχίδαι (Ael. *Fr.* 57).

7 Two inscriptions on amphorae found in Kuşāna context at Dil’berdzhin reading: Βρο | αχγιδ and Βρο | αχγ; cf. В. А. ЛИВШИЦ, “Надписи из Дильберджина”, *Древняя Бактрия* 1976, 163–167; P. BERNARD, *Fouilles d’Aï Khanoum. IV: Les monnaies hors trésors; Questions d’histoire gréco-bactrienne*, Paris 1985, 123–125; И. Р. ПИЧИКАН, “Город Бранхидов”, *ВДИ* 2 (1991), 168–180.

8 Curt. VII 5.35.

9 Curt. VII 5.30.

10 J. SÉMELIN, *Purify and Destroy: The Political Uses of Massacre and Genocide*, New York 2007, 340.

11 E.g. the Haitian revolution.

12 A. JONES, *Genocide: A Comprehensive Introduction*, London 2006, 50.

13 Curt. VII 5.35.

vised against the actual authors of the treason and not their descendants. In the *Suda* we find further justification of Alexander's action in the explanation that he killed Branchidae judging that the offspring of evil is evil (κακοὺς εἶναι κρίνων τοὺς τῶν κακῶν ἐκγόνους).¹⁴ The only known ancient criticism of the massacre of the Branchidae was expressed by Plutarch, who stated that even those who really love Alexander (τὸν Ἀλέξανδρον οἱ πάνυ φιλοῦντες) do not approve of it (οὐδ' ἐπαινοῦσι).¹⁵ Today the punishment for the offense of the ancestors on their descendants is not legally or customarily recognized. However, as one can see from the presented material, in ancient times it was not so obvious. It also needs to be noted that the preserved texts are only a specimen of how people in antiquity judged the deed of Alexander.

However, returning to the charges against the Branchidae, let us call the witnesses.¹⁶ The first witness is Herodotus, who described an oracle concerning the fate of Miletus and its subsequent fulfilment, namely the destruction of the temple and the shrine in Didyma by the Persians and the resettlement of Milesian captives to Ampe by Darius the Great.¹⁷ That resettlement occurred after the fall of Miletus in 494 BC.¹⁸ However, the account of the destruction of the temple and the shrine in Didyma was, according to Hammond, introduced by Herodotus parenthetically and it referred to what happened not in 494 BC in the time of Darius, because he had a special regard for Apollo, but in 479 BC in the time of Xerxes.¹⁹ Other witnesses also mention the plundering and destruction of the temple in the time of Xerxes. In one passage Strabo reported that in Sogdiana Alexander destroyed the city of the Branchidae, who were settled there by Xerxes after they had willingly (ἐκόντας) departed with him from their country, because they had betrayed to him the treasures of the god at Didyma.²⁰ This is also confirmed in another passage in the *Geography*, where we read that the Branchidae fled with Xerxes to avoid punishment for temple-robbery and treason (τοῦ μὴ τίσαι δίκας τῆς ἱεροσυλίας καὶ τῆς προδοσίας).²¹ According to Strabo, they had betrayed the temple, which was then set on fire by Xerxes. But later a new temple was built in Didyma, which, according to Strabo, was the largest temple in the world at that time (μέγιστον νεὼν τῶν πάντων). Strabo described further²² the prophecies given to Alexander at Branchidae.²³ He explained that the oracle had ceased to speak and the spring had ceased to flow from the time the Branchidae sided with the Persians in the time of Xerxes and robbed the temple (ἐξ ὅτου τὸ ἱερὸν ὑπὸ τῶν Βραγχιδῶν σεσύλητο ἐπὶ Ξέρξου περσισάντων). However, thanks to Alexander the spring began to flow again and the oracle spoke giving prophecies about Alexander's descent from Zeus, his future victory near Arbela, the death of Darius, and the revolutionary movements in Lacedaemon.

14 *Suid.*, s.v. Βραγχίδαί.

15 *Plu. Mor.* 557b.

16 In the present article, which presents a fictional process, the word witness refers to the ancient authors who wrote about the Branchidae, their treason and the massacre.

17 *Hdt.* VI 19–20.

18 T.S. BROWN, "Aristodicus of Cyme and the Branchidae", *AJPh* 99 (1978), 70.

19 N.G.L. HAMMOND, "The Branchidae at Didyma and in Sogdiana", *CQ* 48 (1998), 340.

20 *Str.* XI 11.4.

21 *Str.* XIV 1.5.

22 *Str.* XVII 1.43.

23 ἐν Βραγχίδαῖς, where Branchidae may refer to both the clan and the place of the oracle.

Diodorus confirmed that the Branchidae were settled by the Persians on the borders of their kingdom and slain by Alexander as traitors.²⁴ Curtius Rufus provided the most detailed description of the massacre of the Branchidae in Sogdiana.²⁵ He explained that they had migrated from Miletus by order of Xerxes (*iussu Xerxis*) on his return from Greece, and had settled in that place, because they had violated the temple in favour of Xerxes. Pausanias discussed another detail of these events, namely the bronze Apollo carried away by Xerxes and returned by Seleucus from Ecbatana.²⁶ The most unfavourable to the Branchidae is the account in the *Suda*, where we read that after betraying the temple to the barbarians they asked Xerxes for a reward of this worst treason (μισθὸν τῆς κακίστης ἐκείνης προδοσίας).²⁷ When he settled them in Asia, they thought they had escaped not only the Milesians, but also punishment (δίκην). However, the divine providence was not asleep (οὐ μὲν ἐκάθευδεν ἡ τοῦ θεοῦ πρόνοια) and Alexander took revenge on them. Thus presented events show Alexander as divine avenger or contractor of divine justice. The mention about the divine providence (πρόνοια) may indicate a relation with Ἀθηνᾶ Πρόνοια, who was a very important goddess for Alexander. Moreover, Apollo, whose temple was destroyed as a result of the betrayal, was even more important. As already mentioned, the only ancient author, who presented the deed of Alexander as inglorious, was Plutarch.²⁸

From the above presentation of the case by the witnesses it follows that the Branchidae were either justly or unjustly punished for their forefathers' treason of the temple in Didyma in 479 BC. Unfortunately, we cannot interrogate the defendants, but we can ask the jury to express an opinion on the case.

3 Opinions of the expert witnesses²⁹

The opinions of the expert witnesses vary significantly. Most straightforward opinion resulting from a literal reading of the sources was expressed by Beal, who argued that "Alexander doubtless considered himself as executing the wrath of Apollo against an accursed race who had robbed the treasure of the god."³⁰ Similarly Hammond claimed that "Alexander decided to exact retribution for the sins of the past generations of Branchidae, sins committed both against Apollo and against the Greeks."³¹ In this way he was supposed to fill the prophecy of Apollo of Delphi concerning a victory of the Greeks over the Persians to exact retribution for their crimes against the Greek temples (λαβεῖν παρ' αὐτῶν δίκας ὑπὲρ τῆς εἰς τὰ ἱερὰ γενομένης παρανομίας).³²

24 D.S. XVII κ.

25 Curt. VII 5.28–35.

26 Paus. I 16.3; VIII 46.3.

27 *Suid.*, s.v. Βραγχίδαι.

28 Plu. *Mor.* 557b.

29 By the expert witnesses the author of this article means the scholars who expressed their opinion on the massacre of the Branchidae. It needs to be noted that not all the expert witnesses were summoned, only those who said something new on the topic.

30 S. BEAL, "The Branchidae", *The Indian Antiquary* 9 (1880), 69.

31 HAMMOND, "Branchidae" (n. 19), 344.

32 D.S. XVI 89.2.

The opinions of Tarn that there were no Branchidae in Didyma in the time of Xerxes³³ and that the story about the massacre is untrue³⁴ are rejected by most scholars. Although Fontenrose argued that “The story is an invention of the Alexander historians, probably Kallisthenes”,³⁵ however, as rightly noted by Nawotka, Callisthenes “was favourably disposed to his monarch and would hardly invent a story casting him in such a bad light.”³⁶ Also the theory by Brown that the story about the treason of the Branchidae comes from Xanthus’ *Lydiaca*, where they betrayed the Lydian cause and not the Greeks,³⁷ is not met with positive response, not mentioning Panchenko’s eccentric theory, according to which, Alexander slaughtered all the Branchidae just because he needed wood.³⁸

Worth considering is the opinion expressed by such scholars as Taeger³⁹ and Badian,⁴⁰ who claimed that the oracles were stimulated to prophecy for Alexander’s benefit and thus he needed control over them. This view is confirmed by the passage in Strabo on the prophecies given to Alexander at Branchidae, showing a miraculous restoration of the oracle thanks to Alexander.⁴¹ Parke also argued that the slaughter of the Branchidae “was a guarantee that the oracle of Didyma, whose propaganda value was already recognized, would not fall into the hands of dubious semi-orientals.”⁴² According to this theory, the reason for the massacre of the Branchidae was not revenge, but the desire to control the oracle. The motive of revenge appeared *post eventum* in order to justify the deed of Alexander. Similarly Bosworth explained that Alexander could justify the looting and murder retrospectively by involving the theme of revenge.⁴³ However, in his opinion the cause of the attack on the Branchidae was not any desire to control the oracle, but simply a cathartic release.

Quite an interesting theory, according to which the culture shock was the cause of the massacre, was presented by Mairs. In her opinion, “Now bilingual and barely maintaining their Greek lifestyle, the Branchidae perhaps represented what Alexander’s soldiers and settlers did not want to become.”⁴⁴ However, if the massacre was induced by the soldiers and not by order of Alexander, a more likely explanation seems to be that presented by Nawotka that “the slaughter resulted from a lack of moral discipline among the Macedonian

33 W.W. TARN, “The Massacre of the Branchidae”, *CR* 36 (1922), 63–66; cf. N. EHRHARDT, “Didyma und Milet in archaischer Zeit”, *Chiron* 28 (1998), 19, who claimed that in historical times there were no Branchidae, and the word denoted only the location or the sanctuary of Didyma.

34 W.W. TARN, *Alexander the Great*, II: *Sources and Studies*, Cambridge 1948, 272–275.

35 J. FONTENROSE, *Didyma: Apollo’s Oracle, Cult and Companions*, Berkeley 1988, 12.

36 NAWOTKA, *Alexander* (n. 2), 273.

37 BROWN, “Aristodicus” (n. 18), 64–78.

38 D. PANCHENKO, “The City of the Branchidae and the Question of Greek Contribution to the Intellectual History of India and China”, *Hyperboreus* 8 (2002), 248.

39 F. TAEGER, *Charisma: Studien zur Geschichte des antiken Herrscherkultes*, I, Stuttgart 1957, 197–198.

40 E. BADIAN, “The Deification of Alexander the Great”, in: H.J. Dell (ed.), *Ancient Macedonian Studies in Honor of Charles F. Edson*, Thessaloniki 1981, 46–47.

41 Str. XVII 1.43.

42 H.W. PARKE, “The Massacre of the Branchidae”, *JHS* 105 (1985), 68.

43 A.B. BOSWORTH, *Conquest and Empire: The Reign of Alexander the Great*, Cambridge 1988, 109.

44 R. MAIRS, “Greek identity and the settler community in Hellenistic Bactria and Arachosia”, *Migrations & Identities* 1 (2008), 20.

soldiers after long months of campaigning and enduring extreme conditions raging from the snow capped Hindu Kush to the unbearable heat of Bactria.”⁴⁵

Whatever the cause of the murder of the Branchidae, it seems likely that the theme of revenge appeared *post eventum* in order to justify the deed of Alexander. It seems improbable that the act of the soldiers was in the sources associated with Alexander’s revenge and his personal decision, so the more likely theory seems to be that about the removal by Alexander of the inconvenient Branchidae in order to control the oracle.

4 Audiatur et altera pars

In accordance with the principle of fundamental justice or equity recognized in most legal systems, known as *audi alteram partem* or *audiatur et altera pars*, no person should be condemned, punished or have any property or legal right compromised by a court of law without first having heard that person. This right was also recognized in ancient Greece, which is reflected e.g. in the Greek tragedies.⁴⁶ The Branchidae were deprived of this right by Alexander. As already mentioned at the outset, his act cannot be justified by the so-called *casus belli*, because the Branchidae surrendered to him. Even today, they cannot be either convicted or freed of charges in *absentia*, as well as in the absence of clear evidence; for although most of the witnesses considered them to be traitors, yet one cannot ignore the opinion of some expert witnesses, who argued that the motif of betrayal appeared *post eventum* to justify the act of Alexander. What can be done to rehabilitate the victims and for the benefit of history, is to try and answer the question of who the Branchidae really were, or what was their ethnic identity.

5 The ethnic origin of the Branchidae

The name Branchidae refers to the eponymous Βράγχος. According to Parke, “the most likely hypothesis is that Branchos is derived from some non-Hellenic language of Asia Minor, and that the worship of a Sun God at Didyma antedated the arrival of the Ionians.”⁴⁷ As Pausanias explained,⁴⁸ the shrine (ἱερὸν) and the oracle (μαντεῖον) of Apollo at Didyma are earlier than the times of the immigration of the Ionians, while the cult of Ephesian Artemis is even earlier.⁴⁹ Archaeological excavations show that the sanctuary of Apollo initially consisted of wooden buildings, in the late 7th century BC replaced by stone ναῖσκος. Around 550–530 BC a second temple was built.⁵⁰ Also in the 6th century BC the sanctuary gained its prestige in the days of the Branchidae.

The place of the oracle was called either Branchidae or Didyma. Also the oracle itself was once called the oracle of the Branchidae, but later of Didymaeon Apollo.⁵¹ According

45 NAWOTKA, *Alexander* (n. 2), 273.

46 Cf. A. *Eu.* 428–435.

47 PARKE, “Massacre” (n. 42), 60.

48 Paus. VII 2.6.

49 Cf. FONTENROSE, *Didyma* (n. 35), 6, who denied that there was any oracle or perhaps even any settlement or sanctuary at Didyma before 1000 BC. On the contrary, he argued that it was probably founded after the Ionians had been settled for at least a century in Miletus, probably not before 900 BC at earliest.

50 Cf. story of Aristodicus (545 BC).

51 Plin. *Nat.* V 31.

to Wilamowitz-Moellendorff, there is a relationship between the Δίδυμα and the name of Cybele Δινδυμήνη from Mount Dindymon in Phrygia, in Anatolia.⁵² In the *Suda* the Branchidae are referred to as ἐν Δινδύμοις τῆς Μιλησίας οἰκοῦντες,⁵³ which may indicate that the author wanted to make a distinction between two different locations determined as ἐν Δινδύμοις. It needs to be noted that, according to the currently recognized etymology of Δίδυμα, this word is derived from δίδυμος (“double, twin”) and refers to the twins or the twin temples of Apollo and Artemis. However, this etymology may be explained by a folk etymological appropriation.

The theory of Wilamowitz-Moellendorff about the relationship between Didyma and Cybele Dindymene is further supported by the account in Strabo about the Magnetes, who are the descendants of Delphians, who settled in the Didyman hills (Δίδυμα ὄρη) in Thessaly, where also the temple of Dindymene was located.⁵⁴ As reported by Strabo, the city has been transferred to another site and in the present city is the temple of Artemis Leucophryene, while the Magnetes were utterly destroyed by the Treres, a Cimmerian tribe, the Ephesians then took possession of that place.

We can trace the mythical ancestry of the Magnetes to Thyia, a daughter of Deucalion, who had two sons with Zeus: Magnes and Makedon, the eponyms of Magnetes and Macedonians respectively.⁵⁵ Later the Magnetes appeared as taking part in the Trojan war. From their name are derived several places called Magnesia. The first known Magnesia was in Thessaly, where Mount Ossa was situated. The second Magnesia was on the Maeander in Ionia, where, according to Strabo, the Magnetes from Thessaly settled together with Cretans (Μαγνησία ἢ πρὸς Μαιάνδρῳ, Μαγνήτων ἀποικία τῶν ἐν Θετταλίᾳ καὶ Κρητῶν).⁵⁶ Here was the temple of Cybele Dindymene (although Strabo argued that it was in Thessaly). It is worth mentioning in this context that on Crete (and in Troad, in Anatolia) was Mount Ida, where Cybele was worshipped as Mater Idaea. Between 726/660 BC the Magnetes were attacked by the Cimmerians and Magnesia was probably moved to another place at the foot of Mount Thorax, where the temple of Artemis Leucophryene was located.

But how might it be related to the Branchidae except for the similarity of names of Didyma and Cybele Dindymene? Perhaps it may be suspected that the Magnetes were not utterly destroyed by the Treres and that around the 7th century BC some of them settled in the Branchidae and thus brought oriental breeze of the Anatolian goddess to the Apollonian temple, visible not only in the name of the place, but also in the statues of lions connected to the cult of Cybele.⁵⁷ In the context of the resettlement of the Branchidae to Sogdiana it is interesting to note that also in Bactria we find a trace of the cult of Cybele, namely a plate depicting Cybele, a votive sacrifice and the Sun God.⁵⁸

52 U. VON WILAMOWITZ-MOELLENDORFF, “Die Herkunft der Magneten am Maeander”, *Hermes* 30 (1895), 181.

53 *Suid.*, s.v. Βραγχίδαι.

54 Str. XIV 1.40.

55 Hes. *Fr.* 7.

56 Str. XIV 1.12.

57 Cf. a marble statue of a lion on a base from the Sacred Way in Didyma, ca. 550 BC; British Museum.

58 Ai Khanoum, 2nd century BC; Musée Guimet.

Another clue to the origin of the Branchidae can be found in the story by Ammianus Marcellinus about the divinatory consultations of Patricius and Hilarius.⁵⁹ According to Eunapius, Hilarius was from Phrygia and he amassed the gift of foreknowledge from God, so he became an excellent soothsayer (μάντις), while Patricius was from Lydia and he was an inquirer (ἐξεταστής) into different signs.⁶⁰ According to Zosimus, they were learned men and both acquainted with philosophy.⁶¹ In the passage in the *Res Gestae* Hilarius describes in court, how they constructed a table similar to the Delphic tripod and how they used it in their divinatory practices. Namely, they placed on it a platter made of various metallic substances, with twenty-four letters of the alphabet engraved around its outer rim. Subsequently a priest stood over the tripod and swung a hanging ring fitted to a linen thread. The ring falling in jumps upon individual letters, which detained it, made complete hexameters harmonious with the questions. At the end of the description follows a comparison to the Pythian verses or those proclaimed from the oracles of the Branchidae (*quales leguntur Pythici vel ex oraculis editi Branchidarum*). Looking at the trick used here, one does not need any special knowledge about prestidigitation to figure out that the ring was attracted by a magnet. This in turn suggests a connection with the Magnetes, because the magnetite (Μάγνης λίθος or Μαγνήτις λίθος) was named after the place of its discovery, namely the land of the Magnetes in Thessaly.⁶² As demonstrated by Melfos, Helly and Voudouris, the magnetite occurrences at the Mavrovouni mountain in Thessaly are related with the Magnetes, who lived around Mount Ossa.⁶³ Therefore, it is possible that the descendants of Magnetes of Thessaly, who settled in Ionia and were attacked by the Cimmerians, partly found refuge in the Branchidae. Because they were worshippers of Cybele Dindymene, so the Branchidae began to be called Didyma. They used the magnet in their divinatory practices, and this method was popularized. Perhaps Hilarius and Patricius learned this method in their place of origin, in Phrygia or in Lydia. It is interesting that in the 4th century AD they still preserved the memory of the oracle of the Branchidae, what is more, not about the massacre, but about their oracles.

59 Amm. Marc. XXIX 1.31.

60 Eun. *Hist.* 39.4–5; cf. J. DEN BOEFT et al., *Philological and Historical Commentary on Ammianus Marcellinus XXIX*, Leiden 2013, 16.

61 Zos. IV 15.1; cf. DEN BOEFT et al., *Philological* (n. 60), 16.

62 Μάγνης in the first place means “Magnesian, i.e. a dweller in Magnesia in Thessaly” (*LSJ*, s.v.); Μαγνήτις is an adjective denoting “of Magnesia in Thessaly” (W.J. SLATER, *Lexicon to Pindar*, Berlin 1969, s.v.).

63 V. MELFOS, B. HELLY and P. VOUDOURIS, “The Ancient Greek Names ‘Magnesia’ and ‘Magnetes’ and their Origin from the Magnetite Occurrences at the Mavrovouni Mountain of Thessaly, Central Greece: A Mineralogical–geochemical Approach”, *Archaeological and Anthropological Sciences* 3/2 (2011), 165–172.

Alexander the Great and China

Gościwit Malinowski (Wrocław)

The two great civilizations of the Old World, China in the East and the Mediterranean world in the West met indirectly for the first time at the beginning of the Christian era. Travelling along the Silk Road in 97 AD, Gan Ying (甘英), an envoy of the emperor He of the Han dynasty who was sent by the general Ban Chao (班超), reached the Anxi (安息 Parthia), Tiaozhi (条支 Mesopotamia/Characene) and Sibin (斯賓 Susiana?) next to a large sea and gathered information about the great kingdom Daqin (大秦 Rome), which lay over the immense Western Sea. In 166 AD a group of people claiming to be on an ambassadorial mission from Rome came to Emperor Huan of Han (漢桓帝 146-168) “from Andun (Emperor Marcus Aurelius Antoninus), king of Daqin (Rome)”.¹ These diplomatic events were the result of previous contact between East and West.

As early as 125 BC Zhang Qian (張騫), an envoy, came to the country of Yuezhi (月氏) collecting information about the Western countries Dayuan (大宛 Ferghana), Daxia (大夏 Bactria), Anxi (Parthia), and Tiaozhi (Mesopotamia). A century later, at the beginning of the Augustan era, Latin poetry first mentions a new textile,² i.e. silk, *sericum*, and its manufacturers or suppliers called the Seres, who are commonly identified with the Chinese, even if etymologically the name Seres is derived from the name of the Indian kingdom of Chera or from that of certain merchants in Central Asia.³ The Roman historians mention the embassy of the Seres to Augustus in 26 BC.⁴ Whichever of these dates (125 BC, 40 BC, 26 BC, 97 AD, 166 AD) we consider to be the date of the actual establishment of Sino-Western relations, this occurred at a late point, at a time when the Mediterranean world was definitely Roman. This happened over the course of 200–300 years after the death of Alexander the Great.

It is an historical fact that Alexander stopped his campaign far from the borders of ancient China, before the river Hyphasis (Beas) in India, and a few years earlier only a few

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- 1 *Hou Han Shu* [後漢書] 88 (98): *Xiyu zhuan* 78 [西域傳 “Chapter on the Western Regions”], section 12: “The Products of Da Qin”: “In the ninth yanxi year [166 CE], during the reign of Emperor Huan, the king of Da Qin (the Roman Empire), Andun (安敦 Marcus Aurelius Antoninus), sent envoys from beyond the frontiers through Rinan (Commandery on the central Vietnamese coast), to offer elephant tusks, rhinoceros horn, and turtle shell. This was the very first time there was [direct] communication [between the two countries]. The tribute brought was neither precious nor rare, raising suspicion that the accounts [of the ‘envoys’] might be exaggerated.” (translated by John E. Hill)
 - 2 Hor. *Ep.* 8,15 (ca 40/30 BC): *quid, quod libelli Stoici inter Sericos|| iacere pulvillos amant* (Pillow of Seres).
 - 3 G. MALINOWSKI, “Origin of the name Seres”, in: G. Malinowski, A. Paroń and B.S. Szmoniewski (eds.), *Serica – Da Qin. Studies in Archaeology, Philology and History of Sino–Western Relations (Selected Problems)*, Wrocław 2012, 13–25.
 - 4 AnFlor, epit. 2.3

miles beyond the river Iaxartes (Syr Darya) in Central Asia. At that point Europe, the West and Mediterranean world did not recognize the civilization of the Far East.

And this historical fact that the greatest Western European conqueror of all time and the Chinese East were not aware of each other is one which disturbs scholars and historical enthusiasts, and raises various questions. Was Alexander aware of the existence of China? Or were the Chinese aware about the dramatic changes in the world of the Far West? And finally, a favourite question of alternative history researchers, what if?

What if Alexander the Great had invaded China? Josiah Ober writes that

“Alexander Toynbee once put forward a speculation that has gained a certain fame. What would have happened if, instead of dying at thirty-two [actually 33], Alexander the Great had made it to old age? Toynbee saw Alexander conquering China and dispatching a naval expedition that would circumnavigate to Africa and discover Australia.”⁵

There is also another question: Why did Alexander the Great not try to conquer China? Or maybe he was afraid of confrontation with the Chinese armies? How would the Chinese crossbow of the Warring States compare against a fast-charging sarissa? Another leitmotif is to compare the power of the Macedonian army of Alexander with the army of King Zheng of Qin (秦王政), who became the first emperor of a unified China in 221 BC. Who is more powerful, Qin Shi Huang (秦始皇) or Alexander? Both are heroes of strategic computer games, in which they fight against each other, regardless of the fact that in history they were separated by 100 years.⁶

An unfulfilled desire to see the skirmish of the great armies of the Far East and the Far West provokes special interest in isolated events in which we find references to the European military presence on the borders of China in ancient times. As in the case of the Talas river battle in 36 BC,⁷ which involved the participation of “more than a hundred foot-soldiers, lined up on either side of the gate in a fish-scale formation, [who] were practicing military drill”.⁸ Those soldiers were probably Roman prisoners of war captured by the Parthians after the battle of Carrhae in 54 BC. But a much more romantic proposition is to recognize these soldiers as “Descendants of Alexander the Great’s army who fought in ancient China”.⁹

5 J. OBER, “Conquest Denied. The Premature Death of Alexander the Great”, in: R. Cowley (ed.), *What if?: The World’s Foremost Military Historians Imagine What Might Have Been*, New York 2000, 37. Alternative history: if Alexander the Great had lived to be 69 years old? 312/311 BC – Alexander moves to the Jaxartes river. Having heard of Chinese wealth, he joins an uprising and conquers China. Antigonos is made king of China. 308 BC – Nearchus discovers the sea passage from India to China. In the following centuries, the Chinese population moves down the islands in the south, making Australia a Chinese continent.

6 E.g. Sid Meier’s Civilization series.

7 40.000 Han army of governor Gan Yanshou (甘延壽) vs 13.000 army of Zhizhi (郅支), Xiongnu (匈奴) chief and his Kangju (康居) allies.

8 J.J.L. DUYVENDAK, *An Illustrated Battle-Account in the History of the Former Han Dynasty*, T’oung Pao 34.4 (1938), 259; H.H. DUBS, “A Roman Influence upon Chinese Painting”, *CPh* 38.1 (1943), 13–19.

9 CH.A. MATTHEW, “Greek Hoplites in an Ancient Chinese Siege”, *Journal of Asian History* 45.1/2 (2011), 17–37. Cf. also *Dragon Blade* (天将雄师 Tian Jiang Xiong Shi Celestial General, Heroic

This desire to bring about a meeting of Alexander the Great and China is not merely the product of current imagination. It appears as early as the end of antiquity, when the story of Alexander took on a novel character. In the Greek versions of the *Alexander Romance* the Chinese appear only once. Among the allies attacking Nectanebo, a king of Egypt and the real father of Alexander, there is a reference to the Seres.¹⁰ Of course, it is not absolutely certain that the Seres should be identified with the Chinese and not with some Indian or Central Asian people.

A Chinese episode absent from the Greek versions appears in many medieval Oriental versions of the *Alexander Romance*. This episode depicts the (fictional) pacific conquest of China by Alexander, just after his victory over an Indian king, Poros, and his encounter with the Brahmins. It appears in the Syriac¹¹ and Ethiopic¹² versions as well as in the Persian *Shahnamah* of Ferdowsi¹³ and in the early Arabic extracts gathered under the name of ‘Umara ibn Sayd.¹⁴

Alexander fights a dragon just before arriving at the boundaries of China, hunts, then meets with the Chinese King, Khaqan, an Emperor who pays homage to Alexander. Of course, this Chinese episode seemed to later authors of the *Alexander Romance* in different languages to be a necessary complement to the deeds of Alexander. The conquest of an exotic and wealthy Chinese state completed the subjugation of the whole world by Alexander. This episode rather uses pre-existing topics (originally placed in Ethiopia or India) as opposed to creating new ones: e.g. the people of Gog and Magog behind Alexander the

Army), a 2015 Chinese–Hong Kong film directed by Daniel Lee and starring Jackie Chan.

- 10 Rec. A – 1.2.2: Μέγιστε Νεκτανεβός, παραπεμπνόμενος πάντα τὸ ἐν εἰρήνῃ εἶναι ἐπίσκεψαι. ἐπικείται γὰρ νέφος οὐκ ὀλίγον μυρίων ἐχθρῶν· εἰσι γὰρ Σκύθαι καὶ Ἀραβες καὶ Ὀξύδρακες <καὶ Ἴβηρες> καὶ Σήρες καὶ Καύκωνες καὶ Ἀπάτες καὶ Βοσπόριοι καὶ Ἀγροὶ καὶ Ζαλβοὶ καὶ Χαλδαῖοι καὶ Μεσσοποταμιοὶ καὶ Ἀγριοφάγοι καὶ Εὐωνυμίται καὶ ὅσα ἐστὶν ἔθνη ἐπὶ τῆς ἀνατολῆς μεγάλα, ἀναρίθμητον στρατὸν ἔχοντα μυρίων ἀνδρῶν σπυρδόντων τὴν σὴν Αἴγυπτον καταλαβεῖν. “Most august Nectanebos, dismiss your faith that the world is at peace, for a great cloud of thousands of enemies is rising. For there are Scythians, Arabians, Oxydraces, Iberes, Seres, Caucones, Dapates, Bosporians, Agri, Zalbi, Chaldaeans, Mesopotamians, Agriophagi, Euonymitae, – all the great nations of the East, – an uncounted host of thousands, who are hastening to seize your Egypt.” (transl. by E.H. Haight).
- 11 “A version close to Alpha, now lost, was translated into Syriac probably in the seventh century (...) The source text was related to A but differs so considerably that it has generally been reckoned a witness for a lost Greek recension known as Delta. It includes the episode of Alexander’s visit to the emperor of China which became a standard feature of the Persian versions.” R. Stoneman, “Primary sources from the classical and early medieval periods”, in: Z.D. Zuwiyya, *A Companion to Alexander Literature in the Middle Ages*, Leiden/Boston 2011, 6. Cf. J.P. MONFERRER-SALA, “Alexander the Great in the Syriac literary tradition”, in: Z.D. Zuwiyya, *A Companion to Alexander Literature in the Middle Ages*, Leiden/Boston 2011, 59, 69.
- 12 P.CH. KOTAR, “The Ethiopic Alexander Romance”, in: Z.D. Zuwiyya, *A Companion to Alexander Literature in the Middle Ages*, Leiden/Boston 2011, 171.
- 13 FIRDAWSI, *Ot nachala tsarstvovaniya Iskendera do nachala tsarstvovaniya Yezdgerda, syna Bekhrama Gura*, Moscow 1984, vv. 3143–3326.
- 14 E. COTTRELL, “Al-Mubaššir ibn Fātik and the α Version of the Alexander Romance”, in: R. Stoneman and I. Netton (eds.), *The ‘Alexander Romance’ in the East (Proceedings of the international conference, Exeter, 26–29 July, 2010)*, 243, cf. Z.D. ZUWIYYA, “The Alexander Romance in the Arabic tradition”, in: Z.D. Zuwiyya, *A Companion to Alexander Literature in the Middle Ages*, Leiden/Boston 2011, 79, 81, 83, 87, 90, 97–98, 108–110.

Great's wall are not the nomads in the neighbourhood of Margiana (Merv), but Mongols from the Great Steppe, and Alexander's wall becomes the Great Wall of China.

However, I do not intend to sacrifice this paper to issues of an alternative history or of the retelling and recycling of the Alexander myth in successive versions of the *Romance*. I would like to make a few remarks on two historical questions.

1 Could the population of China in the Warring States period be aware of Alexander's campaigns in Central Asia and India?

During Alexander's expedition China was not isolated from its Western neighbours. Although the land routes of the later Great Silk Road, directed to the West, were not yet open during the last decades of the 4th century BC, the Indo-European nomadic and semi-nomadic tribes did maintain contact with China. In *ca.* 400 BC the Chinese adopted trousers as well as horse-riding from the ancestors of Tokharians or Iranian-speaking Sakas, Masagetians and Sarmatians. The same tribes fought with Alexander on the banks of the river Syr Darya, so there is a possibility that they informed their Eastern neighbours about these battles.

Unfortunately, in Chinese historiography there is no trace of knowledge about Alexander's campaign before the times of the Ming dynasty. The name of Alexander is first mentioned in Chinese literature in 1595, in the book *Jiaoyou lun* (交友論 "On Friendship. One Hundred Maxims for a Chinese Prince"), written by the Jesuit missionary Matteo Ricci (1552–1610) and dedicated to Feng Yingjing (馮應京 1555–1606), a renowned scholar and civic official. Ricci translated into Chinese some passages from ancient authors; the anecdote on Alexander originates from the *Histories* of Curtius Rufus. In a contemporary context the name "Alexander" is transcribed into Chinese characters as 亞歷山太 (*Yalishan-tai*), 亞力山大 (*Yalishanda*). But Ricci always goes further in the process of the acculturation of European knowledge, traditions and Christian religion into Chinese culture. He proposed as a Chinese name for Alexander 歷山王 (*Lishan wang*), *King Lishan*, which means 'Ancient Mountain'.¹⁵

More than 300 years before the publication of Ricci's book, Zhao Rukuo (1170–1231 趙汝适), a Chinese trade official, wrote a two-volume work, *Zhufan zhi* (諸蕃志 "Description of the Barbarians"), which is one of the best-known and most wide-ranging accounts of foreign places and goods at the time of the Song dynasty. We have a passage (I 37) concerning Alexandria, the city that Alexander built in Egypt/Misir (*mei-si-li* 勿斯里):¹⁶

15 Y. YAMANAKA, "The Islamized Alexander in Chinese Geographies and Encyclopaedias", in: R. Stoneman, K. Erickson and I. Netton (eds.) *The Alexander Romance in Persia and the East*, Groningen 2012, 263.

16 The transliteration *mei-si-li* was proposed by Yamanaka. Hirth and Rockhill – Wu-ssī-li/Mi-sū-li. However, the reconstructed Middle Chinese (6th–11th century) pronunciation of character 勿 is /mjuəw/, according to Karlgren. The basis for the transliteration *mei* is probably the Modern Hokkien pronunciation /mài/.

“The country of *‘at-kən-da*¹⁷ belongs to *mei-si-li* (Egypt). According to tradition, in olden times a stranger (異人), *dzo-k’at-ni*¹⁸ 徂葛尼 by name, built on the shore of the sea a great tower under which the earth was dug out and two rooms were made, well connected and very well secreted. In one vault was grain, in the other were arms. The tower was two hundred *chang* high. Four horses abreast could ascend to two-thirds of its height. In the centre of the building was a great well connecting with the big river. To protect it from surprise by troops of other lands, the whole country guarded this tower that warded off the foes. In the upper and lower parts of it twenty thousand men could readily be stationed to guard, or to sally forth to fight. On the summit there was a wondrous great mirror; if war-ships of other countries made a sudden attack, the mirror detected them beforehand, and the troops were ready in time for duty.” (translated by F. Hirth and W.W. Rockhill; transliteration by Yamanaka).¹⁹

The name of this stranger, *dzo-k’at-ni*, is a Chinese transcription of the Arabic Dhu’l Kar-nayn. So the Islamic Alexander was known in China earlier than the European, Greek or Christian Alexander; nevertheless the references in Ricci’s book and the passage in *Zhufan zhi* come from foreign tradition adapted to Chinese literature more than 1500 years after death of Alexander. So there is no trace of knowledge about Alexander in China via the nomadic tribes of the great steppes.

There is a further point of interest – specifically, the Yunnan Burma road which connected India and China at least from the seventh century BC. The development of Indian connections with China, via the Yunnan, could date back to that period, although on routes that were already known in the second millennium BC.²⁰ The Dian culture, in Yunnan, which appeared before the middle of the first millennium BC, bears influences from Shang and Zhou China, which were transmitted via Sichuan.²¹

Alexander’s deeds would have had to have been known even in Eastern India where the Yunnan road begins. Ancient Sino-Indian cultural relations could also be proven by the fact that the most common name for Zhongguo Middle Kingdom - *China* originates from Sanskrit *Cīnāh* (चीन). The etymology is quite clear. The name Cina is commonly believed to have been derived from the Qin (秦) dynasty.²² Despite the fact that Cinas are mentioned in *Mahabharata*, *Ramayana*, *Puranas*, *Arthashastra*, *Laws of Manu* and Buddhist literature as *Milindapanha*, those references cannot be dated with any precision, and the appearance of the name Cina is instead probably the evidence of later interpolation than that of the

17 Transliteration of Yamanaka. Hirth, Rockhill: O-kön-t’o / Cantonese At-kan-t’o; pinyin: Egentuo

18 Transliteration of Yamanaka. Hirth, Rockhill: Tsu-ko-ni; pinyin: Cugeni; Cantonese: Cougotnei

19 F. HIRTH and W.W. ROCKHILL. *Chau Ju-kua. His Work on the Chinese and Arab Trade in the Twelfth and Thirteenth Centuries, Entitled Chu-fan-chi*. St. Petersburg 1911, 146. YAMANAKA, “Islamized” (n. 15)

20 CH. HIGHAM, “Mainland Southeast Asia from the Neolithic to the Bronze Age”, in: I. Glover and P. Bellwood (eds.), *Southeast Asia: From Prehistory to History*, New York 2004, 57.

21 L. VON FALKENHAUSEN, “The External Connections of Sanxingdui”, *Journal of East Asian Archaeology* 5.1 (2003), 217.

22 Geoff Wade tries to prove that the name China comes from the Yelang, an ancient political entity first described in the 3rd century BC which was centred in what is now western Guizhou province. The inhabitants of this region referred to themselves as *zina*. (G. WADE *The Polity of Yelang* (夜郎) and the *Origins of the Name ‘China’*, Philadelphia 2009).

active Sino-Indian relations during the time of Alexander's expedition. In the literature which can be dated the name Cina appears for the first time only during the years 40–70 AD.²³ However, the very fact that it is derived from the name of the dynasty or country Qin demonstrates that it must have reached China's neighbours before 206 BC, when this dynasty was overthrown.

From the Chinese perspective, the Far East and the Far West seem to be completely isolated from each other in the time of Alexander. Of course, I mean isolation only in the sense of the awareness of the existence of others, not the isolation of technologies, artifacts and ideas, which during those times travelled from West to East via the nomadic tribes of Great Steppe.

2 Could the Alexander be aware of the Warring Kingdoms in China and their civilization, especially silk?

However, if China had not heard of Alexander, had Alexander perhaps heard of China? There is of course a certain disproportion here. Let us take an individual character, an outstanding leader, who flashed through the Eastern countries like a meteor, and indeed the power of his memory in Asia is the result of the almost exclusive Islamicization of the Asiatic countries, where Alexander – or rather Iskander Dhu'l Karnayn – enters as an element of Quran legend.

Yet in distinction from a dynamic character – albeit one who died young – such as Alexander, China was a static, mighty country with a rich civilization which was known by mountain systems to the neighbouring Tibet and the Himalayan Indians. And if Alexander had been in India, could he have heard about China? It is known that the collation of information by his research and intelligence team was something which distinguished his expedition.

The Greek sources appear to be much more certain in that they lend themselves to far more precise dating than the Indian ones. Reference to the Seres is ostensibly made by Ctesias, a historian of Alexander's time. However, the supposition which sometimes appears in academic literature that the Seres were known to Ctesias is incorrect, since it is based on a late 14th-century interpolation in one of the Photius codices (Monacensis Gr. 287).

The possibility that Alexander could have obtained some information about China, or at least about the production or supply of silk by the so-called 'Seres', might be established by the appearance of this ethnic group in various collections of the historical fragments from Alexander's time. Further, in Felix Jacoby's *Die Fragmente der griechischen Historiker*, we find this among the fragments of Nearchus (133 F 19 = Str. XV 1.20)²⁴:

ἐκ τούτου δὲ Νέαρχος φησι τὰς εὐητρίους ὑφαίνεσθαι σινδόνας· τοὺς δὲ Μακεδόνας ἀντὶ κναφάλων αὐτοῖς χρῆσθαι καὶ τοῖς σάγμασι σάγης· τοιαῦτα δὲ καὶ τὰ σηρικά, ἕκ τινων φλοῶν ξαινομένης βύσσου. εἶρηκε δὲ καὶ περὶ τῶν καλάμων ὅτι ... "Near-

23 *Peripl. M. Rubr.* 64: πόλις μεσόγειος μεγίστη, λεγομένη Θῖνα ... Εἰς δὲ τὴν Θῖνα ταύτην and 65: ἐπὶ τὴν συνορίαν τῆς Θινὸς ἔθνος τι ... καὶ τῶν ἐπὶ τῆς Θινὸς.

24 M. WHITBY, "Nearchos(133)", *Brill's New Jacoby*, <http://referenceworks.brillonline.com.ezproxy.liv.ac.uk/entries/brill-s-new-jacoby/nearchos-133-a133>, accessed on 25 January 2014.

chos says that from this are woven garments of fine thread and that the Macedonians used them instead of pillows and as saddle-cloths. The *serica* are also similar, while *byssos* is carded from certain tissues. He said that there are reeds which..." (trans. by M. Whitby).

Among the fragments of Onesicritus (134 F 24 = Str. XV 1.34) we find information about the long-lived nation of the Seres:²⁵

λέγει δὲ καὶ περὶ τῆς Μουσικανοῦ χώρας ἐπὶ πλέον, ἐγκωμιάζων αὐτήν, ὅν τινα κοινὰ καὶ ἄλλοις Ἰνδοῖς ἱσθόρηται, ὥς τὸ μακρόβιον, ὥστε καὶ τριάκοντα ἐπὶ τοῖς ἑκατὸν προσλαμβάνειν (καὶ γὰρ τοὺς Σῆρας ἔτι τούτων μακροβιωτέρους τινὲς φασί), καὶ τὸ λιτόβιον καὶ τὸ ὑγιεινόν "He also speaks at length about the country of Musikanos, praising it for things of which some are recorded as being shared with other Indians as well, for example their longevity, so that they reach 130 years – and some say that the Seres live for still longer than these – frugality, and healthiness", (trans. by M. Whitby).

Unfortunately, close analysis of these fragments shows that references to silk, *sericum*, and the Seres, come only in references to historians on Alexander made by Strabo, a geographer from the Augustan period, when the Seres first became widely known across the Mediterranean world.

However, we must ascertain that in Alexander's times the only possible environment which could have been aware of the existence of Chinese civilization and the conquests made by Alexander were the Indo-European nomads of Central Asia: the Scythians, Sarmatians, Tocharians and the Issedones. They have ensured that these two worlds were not isolated from each other, but there is no concrete evidence that they shared their knowledge of Alexander with China, or they supplied Alexander himself with information about the civilization from over the Yellow River. In Alexander's time the Qin dynasty, from which Western peoples took the name for the Middle Kingdom, originated only under the rule of King Huiwen (秦惠文王 338–311 BC), on its way towards future power. The Qin dynasty, however, only made its first conquests of the Shu (蜀) and Ba (巴) states in the Sichuan basin in 316 BC and there is no evidence that any knowledge about these sieges or the victors reached the Far West. The earliest possible perception of the relationship between the West and China in the sources we have today pertain to the mid-third century BC, where in the architecture of the late Warring States period one can observe Hellenistic influences.²⁶

25 M. WHITBY, "Onesikritos (134)", *Brill's New Jacoby*, <http://referenceworks.brillonline.com.ezproxy.gvsu.edu/entries/brill-s-new-jacoby/onesikritos-134-a134>, accessed on 26 May 2012.

26 R.M. BARNHART, "Alexander in China? Question for Chinese Archaeology", in: Y. Xiaoneng (ed.), *New Perspective on China's Past: Chinese Archaeology in the Twentieth Century*, I: *Culture and Civilization Reconsidered*, New Haven/London/Kansas City 2004, 329–343. Cf. L. CHRISTOPULOS, *Hellenes and Romans in Ancient China (ca. 240 BC – 1398 AD)*, Philadelphia 2012 on the mausoleum of the Qin Shi Huang and the twelve chryselephantine statues.

Alexander the Great as a *Herodotean* Persian King

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The aim of this paper is to point out the similarities between the *Histories* of Herodotus and the account of Alexander the Great's life as preserved in the Alexander-historians.¹ This resemblance helps us understand which aspects of the Achaemenid royal etiquette persisted through the centuries in the common Greek imagination, and to what extent in the literary tradition they contributed to the reception of Alexander III not only as "King of Asia", but also as a "*Herodotean* Persian King".

By examining a set of passages excerpted from the *Histories* and the Alexander-historians' production, it will be argued that the image of Alexander III as a "*Herodotean* Persian King" is the literary result of three causes, sometimes closely intertwined: genuine similarities among Macedonian and Persian cultures and their histories; the historiographical *agenda* of the Alexander-historians; and Alexander III's own propaganda. Therefore, an explanation of the status of each parallel will be sought, by pointing out the stories and the features which are to be ascribed to patterns of the historical narrative – required by the need to present the Asian campaign in a way familiar to the Greek and Roman audience² – and those related to the King of Macedon's genuine desire to emulate and challenge the Achaemenids, in order to appear as a worthy heir to the Persian throne.³

The *Histories* offer a vivid portrait of the first four Persian Kings: Cyrus II the Great (ca. 550–530 BC), Cambyzes II (530–522 BC), Darius I (522–486 BC), and Xerxes I (486–465 BC), covering the period from the foundation of the Achaemenid Empire to the Persian wars with Greece.

Although the Halicarnassian does not show sympathy for tyrannical governments,⁴ the emerging general judgment on the King of Kings and his people is quite positive.⁵ For example, in the Persian *logos*,⁶ while describing their customs and "oddities" – always keeping in mind the Greek world as his reference system⁷ – Herodotus expresses his

1 For Herodotus' reception in antiquity, see S. HORNBLOWER, "Herodotus' influence in antiquity", in: C. Dewald and J. Marincola (eds.), *The Cambridge Companion to Herodotus*, Cambridge 2006, 306–318. In this paper I will focus mainly on the "Greek-speaking" Alexander historians, i.e. on the fragments of the authors contemporary to Alexander III and on the works of those belonging to the "second generation" (Diodorus, Plutarch, Arrian).

2 HORNBLOWER, "Herodotus" (n. 1), 312–313.

3 T. HARRISON, "Mastering the Landscape", in: E.D. Dabrowa (ed.), *Titulus: Essays in Memory of Stanisław Kalita*, Kraków 2004, 28.

4 Hdt. V 92(α), 1; A. ANDREWS, *The Greek Tyrants*, London 1956, 27, 45.

5 M. FLOWER, "Herodotus and Persia", in: Dewald and Marincola (eds.), *Cambridge* (n. 1), 275.

6 Hdt. I 131–140.

7 J. GOULD, *Herodotus*, London 1989, 98–99; J. REDFIELD, "Herodotus the Tourist", in: T. Harrison (ed.), *Greeks and Barbarians*, Edinburgh 2002, 24.

admiration for two Persian νόμοι (laws). The first concerns the upbringing of a child, which is grounded on three basic teachings: to be a good rider, an able bowman, and to tell the truth;⁸ the second regards the prohibition to administrate justice arbitrarily and harm a fellow countryman for a single offence.⁹ Moreover, his evaluation of the Achaemenids is not focussed exclusively on bad actions, but leaves room for the good ones.¹⁰ In fact, they all make remarkable efforts to enlarge the boundaries of the empire, they demonstrate cunning, and they are πολύδωροι (generous) to their peoples. Herodotus' general view is thus summarised in III 89.3: Δαρεῖος μὲν ἦν κάπηλος, Καμβύσης δὲ δεσπότης, Κῦρος δὲ πατήρ (Darius was a shop-keeper, Cambyses a despot, Cyrus a father).

Consequently, the Persian Kings are portrayed as tragic figures rather than as evil tyrants:¹¹ although provided with good qualities, they all fall “in the trap of ἀνάγκη (necessity)”. Their excessive ambitions and the φθόνος τῶν θεῶν (the envy of the gods) are the cause of their failure;¹² with their unhappy ends, they represent a model of unsuccessful expansionism.¹³

The opinions of the Alexander-historians vary greatly: Philip's son is pictured as an ideal virtuous king in the two Plutarchean orations *De Alexandri Magni Fortuna aut Virtute*; but by some contemporary authors he is also perceived as a hot-tempered conqueror, who behaves tyrannically and overindulges in drinking. For example, Callisthenes disagrees with Alexander III's “persianising” – and thus despotic – policy,¹⁴ and Ehippus of Olynthus gives an account of the Macedonian's golden throne and his habit of wearing “sacred vestments at his entertainments.”¹⁵

Both the King of Macedon and the King of Kings are liable to be accused of despotic acts; nonetheless, they display human traits such as generosity and kindness.¹⁶ Therefore, if we hypothetically consider the Alexander-historians' production as a reliable piece of work, a monolithic tradition on Alexander III,¹⁷ it can be argued that, on the whole, the great conqueror shares similarities with the Herodotean description of the first four Persian Kings. In fact, in the *Histories* the historians could find narrations on the Achaemenids' customs and behaviours, which, sagaciously reworked and ascribed to the Macedonian, would have helped them praise or blame him for his conduct.

Broadly speaking, just as Cyrus is a “father” for his subjects, Alexander III is characterised in terms of “parental authority” when, according to Arrian, after the battle at the Granicus River he buries the fallen Macedonian soldiers with their arms and other due honours, and gives immunity from local taxes and different contributions to their parents

8 Hdt. I 136.2.

9 Hdt. I 137.1.

10 K.H. WATERS, *Herodotus on Tyrants and Despots: A Study in Objectivity*, Wiesbaden 1971, 47.

11 R. BICHLER and R. ROLLINGER, *Herodot*, Darmstadt 2000, 86.

12 H.S. VERSNEL, *Coping with the Gods: Wayward Readings in Greek Theology*, Leiden/Boston 2011, 179–187.

13 D. ASHERI, A. LLOYD and A. CORCELLA, *A Commentary on Herodotus books I–IV*, Oxford 2007, 36.

14 Callisthenes, *FGrH* 124, T8 = Arr. *An.* IV 10.

15 Ehippus, *FGrH* 126, F4–5 = Ath. XII 53.

16 H. MONTGOMERY, “The Greek Historians of Alexander as Literature”, in: J. Carlsen et al. (eds.), *Alexander the Great: Reality and Myth*, Rome 1993, 96.

17 See n. 1. The Alexander-historians of the “second generation” adopt ideas and historical patterns already present in the contemporary authors and adapt them to their Greco–Roman cultural environment.

and children. Moreover, he takes care of the injured, “by visiting in person each of them, looking at the wounds and asking how one was wounded”, and allowing his soldiers to tell what they did and to boast about themselves.¹⁸ Alexander III also illustrates Darius I’s enterprise and curiosity for unknown places on many occasions during his campaign; the foundation of Alexandria of Egypt¹⁹ and his *last plans*²⁰ are two remarkable steps which contribute to the creation of the myth of the Macedonian as a great builder and indefatigable explorer.

Alexandria of Egypt is the most glorious of the King of Macedon’s numerous city-foundations;²¹ the sources do not agree whether he started its setting up before or after his journey to the oracle of Zeus-Ammon,²² but they all make clear that it was a huge undertaking and that he put considerable effort into it. This foundation-story projects the image of a highly skilled ruler, who can fill the role of an architect as well, showing where to erect the main buildings and the wall of the city. Alexander III appears to be provided with foresight and considerable instinct for affairs and trades too, given that Alexandria will become a big and wealthy cultural centre of the Hellenistic period. Furthermore, in the *last plans* Philip II’s son is presented not only as a builder with majestic projects, such as warships, roads, and temples, but also as a curious explorer, desiring to reach the Pillars of Hercules. He is a civiliser too, since he wishes to transplant populations from Asia to Europe and vice versa.

But as Herodotus often quotes different points of view and versions of the same story, without trying to harmonise them,²³ similarly in the Alexander-historians, – even leaving aside the tradition hostile to Alexander III – we find narrations of some deeds which shed a

18 Arr. *An.* I 16. 5.

19 Arr. *An.* III 1.5–2.2. Cf. Plu. *Alex.* 26.2–6: this is a more fictional version, in which Alexander III is led to the foundation of the city by Homer’s words, who had appeared to him in a dream. See A.B. BOSWORTH, *A Historical Commentary on Arrian’s History of Alexander*, I: *Commentary on Books IV–V*, Oxford 1980, 264–266.

20 D.S. XVIII 4.3–4: ἦν δὲ τῶν ὑπομνημάτων τὰ μέγιστα καὶ μνήμης ἄξια τότε (the following were the greatest and the most remarkable items of his *memoranda*). Similarly, Arrian (*An.* VII 1.1–4) speaks of Ἀλεξάνδρου τὰ ἐνθυμήματα (thoughts, desires), admitting that their authenticity has not been proven. Yet, the historian deems these plans possible, considering Alexander III’s curiosity and strenuousness.

21 Plu. *Mor.* 328 E: Ἀλέξανδρος δ’ ὑπὲρ ἐβδομήκοντα πόλεις βαρβάρους ἔθνεσιν ἐγκτίσας (“Alexander, having founded more than 70 cities among the barbaric tribes”). For a complete list of references about Alexander III’s foundations in ancient authors, see N.G.L. HAMMOND, “Alexander’s Newly-founded Cities”, *GRBS* 39 (1998), 243–269; W. HECKEL and J.C. YARDLEY, *Alexander the Great: Historical Texts in Translation*, Oxford 2004, 303–306. Cf. M.P. FRASER, *Cities of Alexander the Great*, Oxford 1996, who maintains that Alexander III’s foundations were 6, and R. LANE FOX, “The first Hellenistic man”, in: A. Erskine and L. Llewellyn-Jones (eds.), *Creating a Hellenistic World*, Swansea 2011, 8, who suggests 16.

22 Plutarch (*Alex.* 26.6) and Arrian (*An.* III 3.3) set the foundation before the visit to Siwah; Diodorus (XVII 51.4–52.2), Curtius (IV 8.1–6), Justin (XI 11.13), and Pseudo-Callisthenes (I 30–32) afterwards. For the scholarly discussion about the chronology of the foundation, see C.B. WELLES, “The Discovery of the Sarapis and the Foundation of Alexandria”, *Historia* 11 (1962), 275–284, who, on the basis of Pseudo-Callisthenes’ account, defends the veracity of the Vulgate chronology; *contra* M.P. FRASER, *Ptolemaic Alexandria*, Oxford 1972, I, 3–7, n. 6; II, 2–3, endorses Arrian’s reliability and sequence of the facts. A.B. BOSWORTH, “Errors in Arrian”, *CQ* 26 (1976), 137–139: it may be that Alexander planned to build up Alexandria on his outward journey to the Ammonium and implemented it upon his return – an hypothesis which solves the conundrum of the different chronologies offered by the sources.

23 WATERS, *Herodotus* (n. 10), 58.

negative light on him. These remind us of Cambyses' whimsical attitude and fondness of wine,²⁴ or of Xerxes' ἀτασθαλίη (conceit, hybriistic behaviour).²⁵ In such cases, the value of the great campaign of conquest of the Persian Empire is reduced to being the mere fruit of the Macedonian's own stubbornness and megalomania. One clear example is the ruinous march into the Gedrosian desert, in which Alexander III drags his soldiers just because he desires to outdo Semiramis and Cyrus' deeds.²⁶

This general persistence of Herodotean images in the Alexander-historians – such as the “father-king”, the “builder-king”, or the “wicked tyrant”²⁷ – strongly suggests that the *Histories* were still a frame of reference, both for Alexander III, who had to prepare himself for an unprecedented task, and for the authors who had to describe and explain it to the Greek-speaking audience.

Now, by pairing stories excerpted from Herodotus and the Alexander-historians' narratives, the following survey aims at drawing attention to the aspects that project Alexander III as a *Herodotean* Persian King or as an exact reverse of it.

1 Alexander III: similarities with the *Herodotean* Persian King

1.1 The King and nature

Alexander the Great is often described as an indefatigable conqueror, always eager to discover new places, to occupy himself in challenging tasks, and to overcome every physical obstacle in his way.²⁸ Similarly, the Persian Kings are masters and protectors of their land, and enlarging the boundaries of the empire is considered one of their duties.²⁹ The Achaemenids are frequently linked to rivers, which they respect profoundly.³⁰ Exactly this reverence towards water adds more gravity to Xerxes' hybriistic whipping of the Hellespont,³¹

24 Hdt. III 34.2.

25 Hdt. VII 35.2

26 Arr. *An.* VI 24.3: ἔριν ἐμβαλεῖν πρὸς Κῦρον καὶ Σεμίραμιν (“[Alexander betook himself] to rival Cyrus and Semiramis”). Cf. this disastrous campaign with Herodotus' account of Cambyses' march against the Ethiopians (III 25).

27 For the image that the Persian King wanted to display of himself among his people, see P. BRIANT, *From Cyrus to Alexander: A History of the Persian Empire*, Winona Lake 2002, 165–203.

28 Plu. *Alex.* 26.7 pictures a tireless and obstinate Alexander subduing enemies, times and places. The passage draws upon the Herodotean account of the Achaemenid ideas of steady expansionism and triumph over obstacles; see Hdt. IV 118.5: νῦν δὲ ἐπεῖτε τάχιστα διέβη ἐς τήνδε τὴν ἡπειρον, τοὺς αἰεὶ ἐμποδῶν γινομένους ἡμεροῦται πάντας (“as son as [Darius I] crossed over to this continent, he has always been taming all those being on his way”).

29 Hdt. VII 8(α).1–2: τὰ μὲν νυν Κῦρός τε καὶ Καμβύσης πατὴρ τε ἐμὸς Δαρεῖος κατεργάσαντο καὶ προσεκτίσαντο ἔθνεα [...] (2) ἐγὼ δὲ ἐπεῖτε παρέλαβον τὸν θρόνον τοῦτον, ἐφρόντιζον ὅπως μὴ λείψομαι τὸν πρότερον γενομένων ἐν τιμῇ τῇδε μηδὲ ἐλάσσω προσκλήσομαι δύναμιν Πέρσης (as it is, Cyrus, Cambyses, and Darius my father subdued and added nations [...]) (2) “Since I received this throne, I considered how I might not be inferior of my predecessors in this honour, and not gain less power to the Persians”).

30 Hdt. I 138.2: ἐς ποταμὸν δὲ οὔτε ἐνουρέουσι οὔτε ἐμπύουσι, οὐ χεῖρας ἐναπονίζονται, οὐδὲ ἄλλον οὐδένα περιορῶσι, ἀλλὰ σέβονται ποταμοὺς μάλιστα (“they do not urinate in rivers, nor spit; they do not wash their hands in them, nor allow someone else; but they revere rivers most of all”).

31 Hdt. VII 35. Cf. Plu. *Mor.* 342 E draws a parallel between Xerxes, using fetters to cross the Hellespont, and Alexander, who relies on his small but virtuous army. J.D. MIKALSON, *Herodotus and Religion in the Persian Wars*, Chapel Hill/London 2003, 44–45: Xerxes's chastising of the sea became a symbol of

but also more solemnity to his subsequent libation before crossing it.³² The King of Macedon himself displays a lack of respect when derogating the river Granicus and calling it *σμικρὸν ῥεῦμα* (little stream),³³ but, during his campaign, the importance of the river-crossing – and of the libations to propitiate it – is related on many occasions by Arrian. For example, Alexander III sacrifices to Zeus, Heracles, and Istros (the river god) on the banks of the Danube (*An.* I 4.5); he sets altars to Zeus, Athena, and Heracles after the crossing of the Hellespont (*An.* I 11.6); finally, at the Hyphasis River, not admitting the real cause of the end of the campaign – the mutiny of his soldiers – he asserts that the omens are not favourable for a further march (*An.* V 28.4).

Moreover, the Macedonian conqueror's efforts in mastering nature remind us of the engineering projects of the Persian Kings:³⁴ i.e., Cyrus' painstaking division of the river Gyn-des into 360 channels before the conquest of Babylon,³⁵ Darius I' construction of the Suez canal,³⁶ and Xerxes' three-year-plan to carve the channel across the Athos.³⁷ These undertakings offer a suitable parallel to Alexander III's insistence on the difficult and time-consuming construction of the mole during the siege of Tyre.³⁸

Certainly, strenuousness was likely to have been a real characteristic of the Macedonian conqueror, but it is exaggerated by the historians, who want either to stress the antagonism and the contrast between Philip II's son and the Achaemenids, or simply to explain some of his hardly justifiable actions. In some cases, these similarities with the "tyrannical figures" of the *Histories* may also suggest a veiled critique of his obstinacy and recklessness.³⁹

impiety in the later Greek tradition.

32 Hdt. VII 54.

33 Arr. *An.* I 13.6. Alexander's derogatory statement aims at thwarting Parmenio's tactical concerns, which were not unfounded. In fact, although the Granicus River might have been shallow and easily fordable in late May, when the Macedonian army reached it, its steep banks were three–four meters high, with muddy and slippery flanks which made the crossing challenging; cf. D.S. XVII 19.2; Plu. *Alex.* 16.3; Arr. *An.* I 13.4. For a discussion on the topography of the Granicus River and on Alexander's tactical choices, see N. NIKOLITSIS, *The Battle of the Granicus*, Stockholm 1974, 10–12; E. BADIAN, "The Battle of the Granicus: A New Look", in: *Ancient Macedonia, II: Papers Read at the Second International Symposium held in Thessaloniki 19–24 August 1973*, Thessaloniki 1977, 271–293; C. FOSS, "The Battle of the Granicus: A New Look", in: *Ancient* (n.33), 495–502; A.B. BOSWORTH, *Conquest and Empire: The Reign of Alexander the Great*, Cambridge 1988, 42.

34 HARRISON, "Mastering" (n. 3), 28–29; T. HARRISON, "Oliver Stone, «Alexander», and the Unity of Mankind", in: P. Cartledge and F.R. Greenland (eds.), *Responses to Oliver Stone's "Alexander": Film, History, and Cultural Studies*, Madison 2010, 228–229.

35 Hdt. I 189–190.1.

36 Hdt. II 158.1.

37 Hdt. VII 22.1–2.

38 D.S. XVII 40.2–46; Plu. *Alex.* 24.3–25.2; Arr. *An.* II 18–24.

39 HARRISON, "Mastering" (n. 3), 31–32.

1.2 Τὸ πολλῶν ἐπιθυμέειν (*the excessive craving*) of the King of Kings

For the expansion of his power⁴⁰ is echoed by the Macedonian's πόθος (longing), which appears ten times in Arrian and five in Curtius (*ingens cupido*).⁴¹ Ehrenberg, having noticed that the expression πόθος ἔλαβεν αὐτόν is present in both Ptolemy and Nearchus, sustains that the two Companions inherit the formula directly from Alexander III, who had forged it to express his own peculiar longing for the unknown, presumably influenced by the frequent recurrence of the words ἕμερος and πόθος in Homer.⁴² Bosworth criticizes Ehrenberg's opinion, arguing that there is no need to suppose that Arrian copies the formula from Ptolemy and Nearchus, since it appears in Herodotus as well,⁴³ and the excessive longing of the tyrant was already a *topos* in the Greek world by the second-half of the 4th c. BC. I agree with Bosworth, for the expression ἔλαβε πόθος is attested in the *Histories* (I 165.3) in the same exact wording.⁴⁴

At any rate, I would like to focus on how the Hellenic literary tradition informed the image which the King of Macedon and his historians endeavour to hand down. In fact, if Ehrenberg's interpretation is correct, the ancient sources represent Alexander III's longing historically, and it is likely that the great conqueror reworked and rivaled the literary tradition extant at his time to give the representation *he* wanted of himself; if Bosworth is to be preferred, than the Macedonian's infinite desire for the unknown is a result of the historiographical reception.

1.3 *Hybris*

Xerxes' ἀτασθαλίη is paralleled by Alexander III's megalomania:⁴⁵ they want to surpass their predecessors, but they only end up exceeding their acts and thoughts. The first desires to expand his empire until the heaven of Zeus;⁴⁶ the latter, although forced to stop his eastward campaign by the mutiny on the Hyphasis (326 BC), nourishes plans to reach the Pillars of Hercules.⁴⁷ The sources probably reflect and highlight the Macedonian conqueror's genuine rivalry and need to outdo the Persians with majestic deeds.⁴⁸

40 Hdt. VII 18.2: the King in question is Xerxes, but *longing* is a general characteristic of the Achaemenids and their generals; see I 201.1: ὥς δὲ τῷ Κύρῳ καὶ τοῦτο τὸ ἔθνος κατέργαστο, ἐπεθύμησε Μασσαγέτας ὑπ' ἐωυτῷ ποιήσασθαι ("when also this population was subdued by Cyrus, he *desired* to subject the Massagetae"); IV 1.1: ἐπεθύμησε ὁ Δαρεῖος τίσασθαι Σκύθας, ὅτι ἐκεῖνοι πρότεροι ἐσβαλόντες ἐς τὴν Μηδικὴν ("Darius *desired* to punish the Skythians, because they had invaded first Media), also connected to the theme of revenge"; and IX 3: οἱ δεινὸς ἐνέστακτο ἕμερος τὰς Ἀθήνας δεῦτερα εἶλεῖν ("[Mardonius] was taken by a mighty desire to take Athens for a second time").

41 For an overview on Alexander III's πόθος, see A. STEWART, *Faces of Power: Alexander's Image and Hellenistic Politics*, Berkley/Oxford 1993, 84, n. 47.

42 V. EHRENBURG, *Alexander and the Greeks*, Oxford 1938, 52–61.

43 BOSWORTH, *Commentary*, I (n. 19), 62.

44 Hdt. I 165.3: ἔλαβε πόθος ("a longing took [the Phocaeans]").

45 Arr. *An.* VII 1.6: the "Indian sophists" deem Alexander ἀτάσθαλος (presumptuous).

46 Hdt. VII 8(γ).1.

47 D.S. XVIII 4.4.

48 P. GOUKOWSKY, *Essai sur les origines du mythe d'Alexandre*, I: *Les origines politiques*, Nancy 1978, 67; A.B. BOSWORTH, "Arrian, Alexander, and the Pursuit of Glory", in: J. Marincola (ed.), *A Companion to Greek and Roman Historiography*, II, Malden/Oxford 2007, 447–450.

1.4 *Luxury*

As Herodotus states in the Persian *logos*, Persians practise εὐπαθείας τε παντοδαπὰς (all kind of luxuries),⁴⁹ and their τρυφή (softness, delicacy) is a common stereotype in Greek authors.⁵⁰ The Alexander-historians are divided in their presentation of Alexander III: either he adopts Persian excessive luxury⁵¹ – thereby being corrupted by it⁵² – or refuses it.⁵³

Plutarch's Alexander, representing the virtuous king, addresses his Companions to convince them not to indulge excessively, since the Macedonians have always been accustomed to toils and it is servile to be luxurious like the vanquished Persians.⁵⁴ Before the battle of Issus, Arrian's Alexander reminds his fellow countrymen that, having faced many hardships and fighting for the Hellenic cause, they do not have to fear the Persians. In fact, the latter have been enfeebled by their sumptuous lifestyle and battle with mercenary troops.⁵⁵ Furthermore, after Darius III's death, Arrian presents him as an unworthy weak King, origin and cause of the Achaemenid empire's decay: τοῦτο τὸ τέλος Δαρείῳ ἐγένετο, [...] ἀνδρὶ τὰ μὲν πολέμια, εἴπερ τινὶ ἄλλῳ, μαλθακῷ τε καὶ οὐ φρενήρει ("such was the end that happened to Darius, [...] besides, a man feeble in warfare and not sound of mind").⁵⁶

The description of Alexander the Great as a wise monarch and charismatic leader is a literary and philosophical motif that has its archetype in Xenophon's *Cyropaedia*;⁵⁷ nevertheless, it is worth noticing that the two aforementioned speeches, while underlining the Macedonian's virtues, display two other well-known Herodotean *topoi*: the contrast between soft and hard people, and the conflict between East and West, slaves and free-men.⁵⁸

1.5 *The figure of the Tragic Warner / Practical Adviser*

Appears constantly in the *Histories*: he wants to help the King take the right decision, by providing a new point of view, or putting him on guard about looming dangers.⁵⁹ For example, Cyrus elects Croesus as his personal councillor. Although at first the Lydian is ignored

49 Hdt. I 135.

50 P. BRIANT, "History and Ideology: the Greeks and «Persian Decadence»", in: HARRISON, *Greeks* (n. 7), 193–210; D. LENFANT, "La «décadence» du Grand Roi et les ambitions de Cyrus le Jeune: aux sources perses d'un mythe occidental?", *REG* 114 (2001), 407–411.

51 D.S. XVII 77.4: ἤρξατο ζηλοῦν τὴν Περσικὴν τρυφὴν καὶ τὴν πολυτέλειαν τῶν Ἀσιατῶν βασιλέων ("[Alexander] started to emulate the Persian *tryphe* and the extravagance of the Asiatic kings").

52 Ephippus, *FGrH* 126, F2 = Ath. IV 27: Alexander III in proportion spends for his dinners with his friends as much as the Persian King! Polyclit. *FGrH* 128, F1 = Ath. XII 55: Πολύκλειτος δ' ὁ Λαρισαῖος ἐν τῇ ὁγδόῃ τῶν Ἱστοριῶν καὶ ἐπὶ χρυσῆς κλίνης κοιμᾶσθαι φησὶ τὸν Ἀλέξανδρον καὶ αὐλητρίδας αὐτῷ καὶ αὐλητὰς αἰεὶ ἔπεσθαι ἐπὶ τὸ στρατόπεδον καὶ πίνειν ἄχρι τῆς ἑως ("Polycleitus of Larissa in the eighth book of the *Histories* says that Alexander used to sleep on a golden couch, female and male flute-players always followed him to the camp, and he used to drink until dawn").

53 Plu. *Alex.* 40–41.1; Polyæn. IV 3.32.

54 Plu. *Alex.* 40.1–3.

55 Arr. *An.* II 7.4.

56 Arr. *An.* III 22.2–3.

57 B. DUE, "Alexander's Inspiration and Ideas", in: Carlsen et al. (eds.), *Alexander* (n. 16), 55–58.

58 REDFIELD, *Herodotus* (n.7), 41–45.

59 See R. LATTIMORE, "The Wise Adviser in Herodotus", *CPh* 34 (1939), 24–35.

when he warns the King not to wage war against the Massagetae – for the same man cannot prosper forever –, eventually his plan of attack on them beyond the Araxes River is followed by the Persian army.⁶⁰

Surely, Artabanus can be considered Herodotus' *tragic warner* par excellence: he advises Darius I not to undertake his campaign against Scythia;⁶¹ he alerts Xerxes of the perils of a war against Greece,⁶² and later at Abydos he prompts him to leave the Ionians behind, deeming it unlikely that they would harm their motherland.⁶³ However, none of his advice is taken by the two Achaemenids.

In the Alexander-historians, the role of the unheeded *warner* is played by Parmenio.⁶⁴ at Granicus, he proposes to Alexander consistently to wait until daybreak to cross the river, so that the Persians would go away for the night and the Macedonians would pass easily before the enemies are back;⁶⁵ when the great conqueror falls ill in Cilicia, Parmenio sends a letter to inform his king not to take Philippus' medicine, because he suspects the physician of having been bribed by Darius III in order to kill him.⁶⁶ During the siege of Tyre, the Achaemenid King sends his second letter to Alexander III, offering him a great sum of money, the lands until the Euphrates River, and his daughter in marriage as a promise of *φιλία* and *συμμαχία* (friendship and alliance).⁶⁷ The general exhorts his king to accept the truce, but the latter refuses, saying that he would accept too, were he Parmenio.⁶⁸ At Gaugamela, the old Companion suggests an attack by night, but Philip II's son proudly replies that he does not steal his victories;⁶⁹ finally, at Persepolis, before the burning of the palace, he reminds Alexander III not to behave like a brutish conqueror, but as a king.⁷⁰

Historicity and historical pattern interplay in the creation of the figure of Parmenio. Certainly, his relations to Alexander III were sometimes tense: the old general represented the conservative Macedonian nobility, and many soldiers admired him and were bound to him because of the glorious victories he gained under Philip II. This could have caused pressure on, and jealousy of, the young king. Moreover, Parmenio's daughter married Attalus, the uncle of Cleopatra Eurydice, thus linking all the family to the faction opposing Olympias.⁷¹

60 Hdt. I 207–208.

61 Hdt. IV 83.

62 Hdt. VII 10–10(α).

63 Hdt. VII 51.

64 H. SANCISI-WEERDENBURG, "Alexander and Persepolis", in: Carlsen et al. (eds.), *Alexander* (n. 16), 178; E.D. CARNEY, "Artifice and Alexander History", in: A.B. Bosworth and E.J. Baynham (eds.), *Alexander the Great in Fact and Fiction*, Oxford 2000, 263–285; J. CHAPLIN, "Conversations in History: Arrian and Herodotus, Parmenio and Alexander", *GRBS* 51 (2011), 615–633.

65 Arr. *An.* I 13.3.

66 Plu. *Alex.* 19.3; Arr. *An.* II 4.9.

67 Arr. *An.* II 25.1; Curt. IV 5.1–6; Just. XI 12.3. For the epistolary exchange between Darius III and Alexander III, see E. MIKROGIANNAKIS, *Ο Διακρατικός Διάλογος κατά την Αρχαιότητα. Αι μεταξύ Αλεξάνδρου Γ' και Δαρείου Γ' Διπλωματικά Επαφαι*, Athens 1969.

68 Plu. *Alex.* 29.4; Arr. *An.* II 25.2.

69 Plu. *Alex.* 31.5–7; Arr. *An.* III 10.1–2.

70 Arr. *An.* III 18.11.

71 GOUKOWSKY, *Essai* (n. 48), 27–28.

In my opinion, however, the sources take on this hostility and explain it by reworking the well-known examples of Croesus and Artabanus presented in the *Histories*. Through these dialogues, they could create the picture of a daring and resourceful Alexander III in contrast with a too conservative and fearful Parmenio, or the image of a hard-headed despotic leader who does not listen to anything but his desire for glory. In the latter case, Parmenio becomes almost a reversal of the Herodotean trope: although representing the logical point of view, he is constantly proven wrong by Alexander III's reckless actions.

1.6 The King's horse

The Alexander-historians well attest Alexander the Great's affection for his steed Bucephalus⁷² and the foundation of the city of Bucephala on the banks of the Hydaspes River in memory of the horse's value.⁷³

In the *Histories*, a parallel to this motif is represented by Darius I, who sets up a statue to honour greatly the "virtue" of his horse. In fact, in the contest for the Persian kingship,⁷⁴ only thanks to a "*manipulated sunrise hippomancy*"⁷⁵ Darius defeats the other six conspirators who together with him had overthrown the magus Gaumata. I would argue that it is not a coincidence that the bravest and most sagacious of the Achaemenids has a canny horse: in historical and literary narratives, heroes are always accompanied by clever steeds in their battles, and strong horses characterised by astonishing traits were considered symbols of power. Furthermore, the importance of the horse breeding in the Achaemenid culture is highlighted by Herodotus in the Persian *logos*, which ascribes to it a prominent position in the education of the Persians; surely this aspect was a perfect match to the Macedonian culture.

1.7 The Great Kings' policy of transplanting populations into remote territories of their domain can be compared to Alexander III's city-foundations in the East of the empire, where he needed to locate Macedonian garrisons and veterans in order to have a hold over the area and till the soil.⁷⁶ Probably, the unfit soldiers settled in these faraway regions felt "punished" in the same way as the populations transplanted by the Achaemenids, for they were often facing revolts.⁷⁷ These foundations are to be considered military settlements which only later, in the Seleucid era, evolved into cities, bearers of the Hellenic culture.⁷⁸

72 Plu. *Alex.* 6.4: Alexander III gently strokes (καταψήσας) Bucephalus with his hand in order to calm it from the fear of its shadow. Cf. Arr. *An.* V 19.5

73 D.S. XVII 95.3; Arr. *An.* V 19.4–5. For the tradition on Bucephalus, see A. Anderson, "Bucephalus and His Legend", *AJPh* 51 (1930), 1–21.

74 Hdt. III 85–88.

75 C. TUPLIN, "All the King's Horses: In Search of Achaemenid Persian Cavalry", in: M. Trundle and G. Fargon (eds.), *New Perspectives on Ancient Warfare*, Leiden 2010, 101–182.

76 BOSWORTH, *Conquest* (n. 33), 245–250.

77 F.L. HOLT, "Alexander's settlements in Central Asia", in: I. Worthington (ed.), *Alexander the Great: A Reader*, New York 2012², 196–202.

78 W.W. TARN, *Alexander the Great*, II, Cambridge 1948, Appendix 8.I, 232–249.

2 Alexander the Great as a reversal of the *Herodotean* Persian King

2.1 *The Great King's role*⁷⁹

Herodotus' Persian King is a traveller within the satrapies of the Empire; he is concerned about his subjects and understands the differences among populations and among their customs. Well known is the account in which Darius I seems familiar with the various traditions of his peoples and he is at ease with acknowledging them: in fact, he accepts both the Greeks' cremation and the Callatiae's consumption of their dead.⁸⁰

Plutarch's description of Alexander III's behaviour before the Eastern populations is the exact reverse of Darius I's "relativism".⁸¹ The Macedonian looks at them as barbarians whom he has to civilise, that is, *Hellenise*: he teaches them to respect the marriage bond and their parents, to bury and not to eat their dead, to till the soil, to read Homer, and to worship Greek gods.⁸² Here Plutarch is following again the *topos* of the contrast between the well-educated Greeks and the uncivilised barbarians.

In reality, although Alexander III's aim was to be accepted by the Iranians as their new leader,⁸³ he differed from the Achaemenids not because he behaved as a "Plutarchaeian civiliser-king", but as a conqueror:⁸⁴ in his campaign he appeared more interested in constantly adding new territories rather than in settling down, consolidating his power, and acquainting himself with the Iranians and their different traditions. Surely a degree of Hellenisation of the locals did occur in Alexander III's Eastern foundations, but it must have been a by-product of the Hellenic presence there, rather than the principal goal of the settlements.⁸⁵ For this reason, especially in the East, territories revolted soon after his departure.⁸⁶

2.2 *The Great King and Egypt*

In Hdt. III, Cambyses is portrayed as a maniac and an oppressor of the Egyptians. As time passes, he commits sacrilegious acts; among them, the outrage of the mummy of Amasis (ch. 16), the killing of the sacred bull Apis (ch. 27–29), and the mockery of the temples in Memphis (ch. 37). When he sends an army against the Ammonians (ch. 26), his soldiers die in the desert covered by heaps of sand.

79 For the role and the function of the Achaemenid King, see J. WIESEHÖFER, *Ancient Persia: From 550 BC to 650 AD*, London 2001, 29–33; BRIANT, *From Cyrus* (n. 27), 167–202.

80 Hdt. III 38.3–4: νόμον πάντων βασιλέα ("the custom is the king of all things").

81 REDFIELD, *Herodotus* (n. 7), 27; T. ROOD, "Herodotus and Foreign Lands", in: Dewald and Marincola (eds.), *Cambridge* (n. 1), 296–300.

82 Plu. *Mor.* 328CE.

83 M. BROSIUS, "Alexander and the Persians", in: J. Roisman (ed.), *Brill's Companion to Alexander the Great*, Leiden 2003, 172–173.

84 SANCISI-WEERDENBURG, "Alexander" (n. 63), 185; J.D. GRAINGER, *Alexander the Great Failure: The Collapse of the Macedonian Empire*, London 2007, 81–82, suggests an extremist interpretations of Alexander III's conquests, calling it "escapism".

85 J.P.C. FULLER, *The Generalship of Alexander the Great*, London 1958, 273; E.N. BORZA, "Ethnicity and Cultural Policy at Alexander's Court", in: Worthington (ed.), *Alexander* (n. 77), 314–317.

86 I. WORTHINGTON, "How «great» was Alexander?", *AHB* 13.2 (1999), 51.

By contrast, Alexander III is welcomed in Egypt, which he conquers without meeting any resistance.⁸⁷ During his expedition to the temple of Ammon, he is helped in his march in the desert by rain and by two ravens.⁸⁸ Once he has arrived at the sanctuary, he is acclaimed as the son of Zeus-Ammon.⁸⁹ Again, the Alexander-historians draw on story-telling patterns to give shape to the account of the journey to the oasis of Siwah. Plutarch even suggests openly to his readers the parallel between the glorious expedition of the Macedonian conqueror, which ends with his recognition as son of the god, and that of Cambyses, which had brought about the utter destruction of his army.

2.3 *The revenge-theme*

Darius I's expedition against Greece is caused by the desire to retaliate against the Athenians for having helped the Ionians burn Sardis down during their revolt against Persian power.⁹⁰ With an inversion of roles, Alexander III's Persian campaign is justified by the Pan-Hellenic idea of vengeance for Xerxes' destruction of the temples of the acropolis in Athens.⁹¹ In his letter of answer to Darius III, the Macedonian makes it clear that he, as commander-in-chief of the Greeks, moved towards Asia in order to punish the Persians, since their ancestors had invaded "*Macedon and the rest of Greece*" and did much harm to the Greeks, even though they had done no wrong before.⁹²

The Pan-Hellenic revenge-theme was long exploited by Alexander III's propaganda, and probably both the conqueror himself and his historians took some motives from the *Histories*, since they were the basic narrative on the Persian wars, the "premise" to the Macedonian campaign against the Persian Empire.

3 Alexander III as a "new type" of Persian King

Alexander III's adoption of the Persian attire was in line with the "orientalisation" that he initiated in 330 BC after Darius III's death. It is described by the sources as a social and political act: he wants to appear as a common leader to all his peoples⁹³ and, therefore, to maintain his reign without strife.⁹⁴ Philip II's son borrows the Great King's diadem (διάδημα),⁹⁵ the partly white tunic (διάλευκος χιτών),⁹⁶ and the belt (ζώνη), symbol of the

87 Arr. *An.* III 1.2; Curt. IV 7.4.

88 Callisthenes, *FGrH* 124, F14 a = Str. XVII 1.43; Plu. *Alex.* 26.6–27.3; Arr. *An.* III 3.

89 D.S. XVII 51.1–2; Plu. *Alex.* 27.3–5; Curt. IV 7.25.

90 Hdt. V 105.2.

91 Str. XV 7; Plu. *Alex.* 38.2; Arr. *An.* III 18.12. For Alexander III's Panhellenism, see M. FLOWER, "Alexander the Great and Panhellenism", in: Bosworth and Baynham (eds.), *Alexander* (n. 64), 97–99.

92 Arr. *An.* II 14.4.

93 Plu. *Mor.* 330 A: ὡς δ' ἡγεμὼν κοινὸς καὶ βασιλεὺς φιλόανθρωπος. See also Plu. *Alex.* 45.1; Arr. *An.* VII 29.4.

94 D.S. XVII 77.4: βασιλείαν ἀδήριτον.

95 The position held by E.A. FREDRICKSMEYER, "The Origins of Alexander's Royal Insignia", *TAPhA* 127 (1997), 97–109, is that the diadem was adopted by Alexander III in association with the hero-god Dionysus. Cf. A. COLLINS, "The Royal Costume and Insignia of Alexander the Great", *AJPh* 133 (2012), 377–385: the diadem was a symbol of the Persian Kingship but, since it was similar to the Hellenic headband, it was not considered offensive by the Greeks.

96 The tunic was red and white, and the sources define this dichromatism with the terms διάλευκος or μεσόλευκος. Ephippus, *FGrH* 126, F5 = Ath. XII. 53: καθ' ἐκάστην ἡμέραν χλαμύδα τε πορφυρᾶν

bond between the Achaemenids and the Iranian society;⁹⁷ but denies himself the tiara (τιάρα), the trousers (ἀναξυρίδες) and the long-sleeved coat (κάνδυσ).⁹⁸

The appropriation of Persian clothing means that Alexander III had understood the powerful symbolism of the royal *insignia*; it was intended to enhance his attempt to be recognised as a rightful successor to the Achaemenids and not to be perceived as a brutish conqueror.⁹⁹ In fact, he needed an ideologically strong counterattack to Bessus' pretensions to the throne after Darius III's death; presenting himself to the Iranians with the royal dress, he could claim to be the avenger of the assassinated King.¹⁰⁰ It is worth noticing that Plutarch underlines in two instances the fact that the great conqueror chooses a "middle way", saying that he mixes elements of the Persian and Median clothing in the *Vita Alexandri*,¹⁰¹ and of the Macedonian and Persian fashions in *De Alexandri Magni Fortuna aut Virtute*.¹⁰² In my opinion, these two statements are not in contradiction with one another:¹⁰³ Arrian (*An.* IV 9.9) too acknowledges Alexander's admiration for both the Persian and the Median clothing style. Moreover, the Achaemenid royal dress was composed of different clothes coming from the multifaceted Iranian background, such as the Persian, the Median, and the Elamite;¹⁰⁴ Alexander III simply left aside its most extravagant items,¹⁰⁵ integrating then some of his own cultural milieu, the Macedonian.¹⁰⁶ The "middle way" had a double aim: first, he did not wish to hurt the feelings of his own fellow countrymen with an excessively ostentatious attire; secondly, he wanted to connect himself directly with Cyrus the Great, the father of the Empire, who used to wear the red and white tunic as a distinctive sign of his royalty.¹⁰⁷ In fact, the Macedonian was not only a tireless general, but also a strenuous reader: his love for Homer is well attested in the sources,¹⁰⁸ and probably he inherited from Herodotus and Xenophon his admiration for Cyrus.¹⁰⁹

καὶ χιτῶνα μεσόλευκον καὶ τὴν καυσίαν ἔχουσιν τὸ διάδημα τὸ βασιλικόν ("[Alexander used to wear] every day a purple *chlamys*, a red and white tunic, and the *kausia* bearing the royal diadem").

97 COLLINS, "Royal" (n. 95), 385–386.

98 D.S. XVII 77.5: εἶτα τὸ τε Περσικὸν διάδημα περιέθετο καὶ τὸν διάλευκον ἐνεδύσατο χιτῶνα καὶ τὴν Περσικὴν ζώνην καὶ τᾶλλα πλὴν τῶν ἀναξυρίδων καὶ τοῦ κἀνδύος. Plu. *Alex.* 45.1–2: οὐδὲ ἀναξυρίδας οὐδὲ κἀνδυν οὐδὲ τιάραν ἔλαβεν.

99 C. MOSSÉ, *Alexander: Destiny and Myth*, Edinburgh 2004, 67–72; P. JAMZADEH, *Alexander Histories and Iranian Reflections: Remnants of Propaganda and Resistance*, Leiden/Boston 2012, 99–104.

100 A.B. BOSWORTH, "Alexander and the Iranians", *JHS* 100 (1980), 5–6.

101 Plu. *Alex.* 45.2: ἐν μέσῳ τινὰ τῆς Περσικῆς καὶ τῆς Μηδικῆς μιζάμενος.

102 Plu. *Mor.* 330 A: ἐκ τοῦ Περσικοῦ καὶ Μακεδονικοῦ τρόπου μεμετγμένην τινὰ στολὴν ἐφόρει.

103 For a discussion on possible contradictions in the Plutarchean description of Alexander's "middle way", see COLLINS, "Royal" (n. 95), 389–392.

104 For the Achaemenid clothing, see S. SHAHBAZI, "Clothing ii. In the Median and Achaemenid Periods", in: *Encyclopaedia Iranica online*.

105 Plu. *Mor.* 330 A: τὰ γὰρ ἑξάλλα καὶ τραγικὰ τοῦ βαρβαρικοῦ κόσμου παραιτησάμενος.

106 COLLINS, "Royal" (n. 95), 372: Alexander's royal sartorial style was a consciously constructed costume in which he selected elements of Macedonian and Achaemenid dress.

107 X. *Cyr.* VIII 3.13: αὐτὸς ἐκ τῶν πυλῶν προφαινετο ὁ Κῦρος ἐφ' ἄρματος ὀρθὴν ἔχων τὴν τιάραν καὶ χιτῶνα πορφυροῦν μεσόλευκον (ἄλλω δ' οὐκ ἔξεστι μεσόλευκον ἔχειν): "Cyrus himself appeared from the gates upon a chariot, wearing his tiara upright and a purple tunic shot with white (no one else is allowed to wear the purple–white tunic)". MOSSÉ, *Alexander* (n. 99), 67–68.

108 Plu. *Alex.* 8.1: ἦν δὲ καὶ φύσει φιλόλογος καὶ φιλαναγνώστης ("he was by nature a lover of learning and reading").

109 Str. XI 11.4: Alexander is described as φιλόκυρος, fond of Cyrus. See P. VASUNIA, *The Gift of the*

In addition, it has to be considered that in consequence of different historical factors, - mainly the Macedonian submission to the Achaemenid Empire during the Persian wars (492–479 BC) and Philip II's plans to set a campaign in Asia - during the 4th c. BC the court of Macedon showed a particular interest in works related to Persia such as Herodotus' *Histories*, Xenophon's *Anabasis* and *Cyropaedia*, and Ctesias' *Persica*.¹¹⁰ Thus, it is highly plausible that Alexander III had read those authors before crossing the Hellespont, and during his stay in the East he continued to use them as a source of geographical and ethnographic information. From this literary baggage he gleaned also stories of gods, heroes, kings, and political ideas which belonged to the Greek and the Persian tradition (the latter in the way it was perceived by the Greeks).¹¹¹ Within this cultural background he developed his plan and aims of conquest, and he gradually adjusted his propaganda according to the situations which came up before him throughout the campaign.

As a result, instead of thinking in terms of black and white choice, supporting the idea of either continuity¹¹² or rupture¹¹³ between the Achaemenid and Alexander III's empire, in my opinion it is more helpful simply to recognise that he created a new figure of king,¹¹⁴ which blended together the Persian, the Macedonian, and the Greek tradition in accordance with his personal needs.

After this general outlook of the Herodotean images that persist in the Alexander-historians, I will analyse two banquet-scenes related by Arrian: the first, on the occasion of the mass wedding at Susa; the second, following the mutiny at Opis. These two *symposia* are put in comparison with the δεῖπνον at Amyntas I's court and at Attaginus' home respectively, described in the *Histories*.

Nile: Hellenizing Egypt from Aeschylus to Alexander, Berkeley/London 2001, 257; DUE, "Alexander's" (n. 57), 54–58; C. TUPLIN, "Persian Decor in *Cyropaedia*: Some Observations", in: H. Sancisi-Weerdenburg and J.W. Drijvers (eds.), *Achaemenid History, V: The Roots of the European Tradition. Proceedings of the 1987 Groningen Achaemenid History Workshop*, Leiden 1990, 22–28.

110 O. MURRAY, "Herodotus and Hellenistic Culture", *CQ* 22 (1972), 205–206.

111 P. BRIANT, "Institutions Perses et histoire comparatiste dans l'historiographie grecque", in: H. Sancisi-Weerdenburg and A. Kurt (eds.), *Achaemenid History, II: the Greek Sources. Proceedings of the Groningen 1984 Achaemenid History Workshop*, Leiden 1987, 1–10; the Achaemenid Empire often represents a model to which Greek historians of the 5th and 4th c. BC compare, and oppose themselves.

112 P. BRIANT, "Conquête territoriale et stratégie idéologique: Alexandre le Grande et l'idéologie monarchique Achéménide", in: P. Briant (ed.), *Rois, Tributs et Paysans: Etudes sur les formations tributaires du Moyen-Orient ancien*, Paris 1982, 357–403; P. BRIANT, "Des Achéménides aux rois hellénistiques, continuités et ruptures", *ASNP* 9 (1979), 1402–1414.

113 J.G. DROYSEN, *Geschichte Alexanders des Großen*, Gotha 1880, I, 360–361.

114 For the "revisionist interpretation", see N.G.L. HAMMOND, "The Kingdom of Asia and the Persian Throne", *Antichthon* 20 (1986), 73–85; E. FREDRICKSMEYER, "Alexander the Great and the Kingdom of Asia", in: Bosworth and Baynham, *Alexander* (n. 64), 136–166; R. LANE FOX, "Alexander the Great: The Last of the Achaemenids?", in: C. Tuplin (ed.), *Persian Responses: Political and Cultural Interaction with(in) the Achaemenid Empire*, Swansea 2007, 286–288; G. WEBER, "The Court of Alexander the Great as Social System", in: W. Heckel and L.A. Trittle (eds.), *Alexander the Great: A New History*, Oxford 2009, 97–98.

4 The first case study: “the Persian *symposium* with women”

4.1 *Hdt. V 18–20: banquet with the Persian envoys at Amyntas' court*

V 18: οἱ ὦν Πέρσαι οἱ πεμφθέντες οὗτοι παρὰ τὸν Ἀμύντην ὡς ἀπίκοντο, αἶτεον ἐλθόντες, ἐς ὅσιν τὴν Ἀμύντειο, Δαρεῖω βασιλείῃ γῆν τε καὶ ὕδωρ. ὁ δὲ ταῦτα τε ἐδίδου καὶ σφεας ἐπὶ ξείνια καλέει, παρασκευασάμενος δὲ **δεῖπνον μεγαλοπρεπὲς** ἐδέκετο τοὺς Πέρσας φιλοφρόνως. (2) ὡς δὲ ἀπὸ δείπνου ἐγένοντο, **διαπίνοντες** εἶπαν οἱ Πέρσαι τάδε. “ξεῖνε Μακεδών, **ἡμῖν νόμος ἐστὶ τοῖσι Πέρσῃσι**, ἐπεὰν δεῖπνον προτιθώμεθα μέγα, τότε καὶ **τὰς παλλακὰς καὶ τὰς κουριδίας γυναῖκας ἐσάγεσθαι παρέδρους**. σύ νυν, ἐπεὶ περ προθύμως μὲν ἐδέξαο μεγάλως δὲ ξεινίζεις, διδοῖς δὲ βασιλείῃ Δαρεῖω γῆν τε καὶ ὕδωρ, ἔπεο νόμῳ τῷ ἡμετέρῳ”. (3) εἶπε πρὸς ταῦτα Ἀμύντης “ὦ Πέρσαι, νόμος μὲν ἡμῖν γε ἐστὶ οὐκ οὗτος, ἀλλὰ **κεχωρίσθαι ἄνδρας γυναικῶν**: ἐπεῖτε δὲ ὑμεῖς ἐόντες δεσπόται προσχρηρίζετε τούτων, παρέσται ὑμῖν καὶ ταῦτα”. εἶπας τοσαῦτα ὁ Ἀμύντης μετεπέμπετο τὰς γυναῖκας: αἱ δ’ ἐπεῖτε καλεόμεναι ἦλθον, **ἐπεξῆς ἀντίαι ἔζοντο τοῖσι Πέρσῃσι**. (4) ἐνθαῦτα οἱ Πέρσαι ἰδόμενοι γυναῖκας εὐμόρφους ἔλεγον πρὸς Ἀμύντην φάμενοι τὸ ποιηθὲν τοῦτο οὐδὲν εἶναι σοφόν: κρέσσον γάρ εἶναι ἀρχῆθεν μὴ ἐλθεῖν τὰς γυναῖκας ἢ ἐλθούσας καὶ **μὴ παριζομένας ἀντίας ἔξεσθαι ἀλγηδόνας σφίσι ὀφθαλμῶν**. (5) ἀναγκαζόμενος δὲ ὁ Ἀμύντης ἐκέλευε παρίζειν: πειθομένων δὲ τῶν γυναικῶν αὐτίκα οἱ Πέρσαι μαστῶν τε ἄπτοντο οἷα **πλεόνως οἰνωμένοι**, καὶ κού τις καὶ φιλέειν ἐπειρᾶτο. [...]

V 20: ὡς δὲ ὁ Ἀμύντης χρηίσας τούτων οἰχώκεε, λέγει ὁ Ἀλέξανδρος πρὸς τοὺς Πέρσας “γυναικῶν τουτέων, ὧς ξεῖνοι, ἐστὶ ὑμῖν πολλὴ εὐπετεία, καὶ εἰ πάσῃσι βούλεσθε μίσεσθαι καὶ ὀκόσῃσι ὦν αὐτέων. (2) τούτου μὲν περὶ αὐτοὶ ἀποσημανέετε: νῦν δέ, σχεδὸν γὰρ ἡδὴ τῆς κοίτης ὥρῃ προσέρχεται ὑμῖν καὶ **καλῶς ἔχοντας ὑμέας ὁρῶ μέθης**, γυναῖκας ταύτας, εἰ ὑμῖν φίλον ἐστὶ, ἅπετε λούσασθαι, λουσαμένας δὲ ὀπίσω προσδέκεσθε”. (3) εἶπας ταῦτα, συνέπαινοι γὰρ ἦσαν οἱ Πέρσαι, γυναῖκας μὲν ἐξελθούσας ἀπέπεμπε ἐς τὴν γυναικῆϊν, αὐτὸς δὲ ὁ Ἀλέξανδρος ἴσους τῇσι γυναιξὶ ἀριθμὸν ἄνδρας λειογενεῖους τῇ τῶν γυναικῶν ἐσθῆτι σκευάσας καὶ ἐγχειρίδια δοῦς [...] (5) ὁ Ἀλέξανδρος **παρίζει Πέρσῃ ἀνδρὶ ἄνδρα Μακεδόνα** ὡς γυναῖκα τῷ λόγῳ: οἱ δέ, ἐπεῖτε σφέων οἱ Πέρσαι ψαύειν ἐπειρῶντο, διεργάζοντο αὐτούς.

“(V 18) When the Persians who had been sent as envoys came to Amyntas, they came at his sight to demand earth and water for the king Darius I. He readily gave these things and invited them to be his guests; having prepared a magnificent dinner, he received them hospitably. (2) After dinner, while drinking together, the Persians said this: “Macedonian, our host, whenever we have a big dinner, it is a custom for us Persians at that time to bring in also the concubines and wedded wives to sit by the men. Now, as you have received us eagerly and you are entertaining us greatly, and you give earth and water to the King Darius I, follow yourself our custom”. (3) To this Amyntas replied: “O Persians, we do not have such custom; instead, men and women sit apart. But since you, being our masters, make this request, this will be offered too”. Having talked as much, Amyntas sent for the women. Once being

called, they entered and sat down in a row opposite the Persians. (4) Then the Persians, seeing beautiful women, spoke to Amyntas declaring that what had been done was not clever at all. For it would be better if from the beginning the women had never come, than that they should come and not sit beside the men, but sit opposite them being a source of pain for their eyes. (5) Amyntas, being compelled to, bade the women sit beside them. When the women were persuaded to do so, straightaway the Persians laid hands on their breasts, so much were they intoxicated with excess of wine, and someone also tried to kiss them.

[V 19: Alexander I, finding unbearable to see Macedonian women harassed by the Persians, bids his father rest. Amyntas leaves, but begs his son not to take imprudent decisions].

(V 20) After Amyntas had asked for these things and had gone his way, Alexander said to the Persians:

“Oh guests, you have full freedom to have these women, also if you want to have an intercourse with all or any of them. (2) At this regard, you decide. But now, for the hour of your rest is almost approaching already, and I see that you are all completely drunk, allow these women to go to wash, if this pleases you. Once they are washed, you receive them back. (3) Having said this, he sent the women coming out into their apartments, for the Persians gave their consent. Alexander then brought inside as many beardless men as were the women, after having dressed them in female clothes and having given them daggers [...] (5) Alexander seated one Macedonian next to a Persian, as though they were women, and when the Persians began to lay hands on them, the Macedonians killed them.”

4.2. *Arr. An. VII 4.6-8: Susa mass-wedding*¹¹⁵

(6) [...] οἱ γάμοι δὲ ἐποιήθησαν **νόμῳ τῷ Περσικῷ**: (7) θρόνοι ἐτέθησαν τοῖς νυμφίοις **ἐφεξῆς** καὶ μετὰ τὸν **πότον** ἦκον αἱ γαμοῦμεναι καὶ **παρεκαθέζοντο** ἐκάστη τῷ ἑαυτῆς. οἱ δὲ ἐδεξιώσαντό τε αὐτὰς καὶ ἐφίλησαν, πρῶτος δὲ ὁ βασιλεὺς ἦρξεν, ἐν τῷ αὐτῷ γὰρ πάντων ἐγίγνοντο οἱ γάμοι. καὶ τοῦτο, εἶπερ τι ἄλλο, ἔδοξε δημοτικόν τε καὶ φιλέταιρον πρᾶξαι Ἀλέξανδρον. (8) οἱ δὲ παραλαβόντες ἀπῆγον τὴν αὐτοῦ ἕκαστος, προῖκας δὲ ξυμπάσαις ἐπέδωκεν Ἀλέξανδρος.

“(6) [...] The weddings were celebrated according to Persian custom. (7) Chairs were placed for the bridegrooms in a row and, after the drinking, the brides came in and each one sat by the side of her groom. They took them by the hand and kissed them; the king began the ceremony, for the weddings of all took place together. If anything else, this seemed that made Alexander popular and comradely. (8) The bridegrooms, after having received their brides, led them away each to his own home, and to all Alexander gave dowry.”

115 See also Plu. *Alex.* 70.2. Chares (*FGrH* 125, F4 = Ath. XII. 54) and the rhetorician Aelianus (*VH* VIII 7) highlight the exceeding pomp of the wedding, with a hundred silver-feet couches, the presence of artists from different parts of the empire, and the division of the guests in separated halls. In these descriptions, the Susa mass wedding do appear to have been held in fully Persian fashion.

In my opinion, the staging and the sequence of the actions show that the δεῖπνον¹¹⁶ at Amyntas' court belongs to the tradition that served as a model for the account of the wedding-feast at Susa.¹¹⁷ In both of them, there is a clear assertion that the banquet is celebrated according to the Persian custom (Hdt. V 18.2: ἡμῖν νόμος ἐστὶ τοῖσι Πέρσῃσι; Arr. *An.* VII 4.6: νόμῳ τῷ Περσικῷ); much stress is put on the act of drinking (Hdt. V 18.2: διαπίνοντες; V 18.5: πλεόνως οἰνωμένοι; Arr. *An.* VII 4.7: μετὰ τὸν πότον), and on the women's presence.¹¹⁸

At Aegae, one Macedonian woman is placed at the side of a Persian man; at Susa, with a nice reversal in the narrative, it is a Persian (or generally, a noble Iranian) woman seated close to a Macedonian man. The act of *sitting* is given emphasis by the persistent use of the verb ἵζομαι/ἕζομαι and its compound forms (παρίζω, παρεκαθίζομαι). It is worth remarking that the women's participation in *symposia* was considered a Persian practice, while in Greece "commensality was essentially an all-male activity".¹¹⁹ This explains why Amyntas I and his son Alexander I feel very uncomfortable with the request of Darius I's envoys.

Interestingly, the Herodotean expression ἀλγηδόνας σφίσι ὀφθαλμῶν is reused by Plutarch in the description of Alexander III's self-control and kindness towards Persian ladies.¹²⁰ Again, this is a reverse image of the Persian envoys abusing Macedonian women at the δεῖπνον.

5 Second case study: "sharing the table with the Great King"

5.1 Hdt. IX 16.1–2: Theban banquet

(1) Ἀτταγῖνος ὁ Φρύνωνος ἀνὴρ Θηβαῖος παρασκευασάμενος μεγάλως ἐκάλεε ἐπὶ ξεινία αὐτόν τε Μαρδόνιον καὶ πεντήκοντα Περσέων τοὺς λογιμωτάτους, κληθέντες δὲ οὗτοι εἶποντο: ἦν δὲ τὸ **δεῖπνον** ποιούμενον ἐν Θήβῃσι. τάδε δὲ ἦδη τὰ ἐπίλοιπα ἤκουον Θερσάνδρου ἀνδρὸς μὲν Ὀρχομενίου, λογίμου δὲ ἐς τὰ πρῶτα ἐν Ὀρχομενῷ. ἔφη δὲ ὁ Θέρσανδρος κληθῆναι καὶ αὐτὸς ὑπὸ Ἀτταγίνου ἐπὶ τὸ δεῖπνον τοῦτο, κληθῆναι δὲ καὶ Θηβαίων ἄνδρας πεντήκοντα, καὶ σφῶν οὐ **χωρὶς ἐκατέρους κλίνει, ἀλλὰ Πέρσῃν τε καὶ Θηβαίων ἐν κλίνῃ ἐκάστη**. (2) ὥς δὲ ἀπὸ δεῖπνου ἦσαν, **διαπινόντων τὸν Πέρσῃν τὸν ὁμόκλινον** Ἑλλάδα γλῶσσαν ἰέντα εἰρέσθαι αὐτὸν ὁποδαπὸς ἐστὶ, αὐτὸς δὲ ὑποκρίνασθαι ὥς εἴη Ὀρχομενίος. τὸν δὲ

116 For the distinction between δεῖπνον, πότος, and συμπόσιον, see E.N. BORZA, "The Symposium at Alexander's Court", *Ancient Macedonia*, III: *Papers Read at the Third International Symposium held in Thessaloniki*, 21–25 September 1977, Thessaloniki 1983, 45–46.

117 See n. 115.

118 D. FEARN, "Herodotus 5.17–22: Narrating ambiguity: Murder and Macedonian Allegiance", in: E. Irwin and E. Greenwood (eds.), *Reading Herodotus: A Study of the "logoi" in Book 5 of Herodotus' "Histories"*, Cambridge 2007, 101–102, asserts that all the dialogue among Amyntas and the Persians is based on the contrast between their opposing νόμοι. Interesting is the view that Alexander I's rejection of the women's rape stands symbolically for his refusal to hand over Macedon to the Great King.

119 O. MURRAY, "Symptotic History", in: O. Murray (ed.), *A Symposium on the Symposion*, Oxford 1990, 6.

120 Plu. *Alex.* 21.5: ἔλεγε παίζων ὡς εἰσὶν ἀλγηδόνες ὁμμάτων αἱ Περσίδες. See G. NENCI, *Le Storie Libro V. La Rivolta della Ionia*, Milano 1994, 177.

εἰπεῖν "ἐπεὶ νῦν **ὁμοτράπεζός** τέ μοι καὶ **ὁμόσπονδος** ἐγένεο, μνημόσυνά τοι γνώμης τῆς ἐμῆς καταλιπέσθαι θέλω [...].

“(1) Attaginus son of Phrynon, a Theban, having made great preparations, invited Mardonius with fifty of the most notable Persians to be his guests at a banquet. So, having been invited, they went; the dinner was held at Thebes. I have heard what follows from Thersander of Orchomenus, one of the most notable men in that city. Thersander said that he was invited to this dinner too by Attaginus, and also fifty Thebans. And they sat down, not each man by himself, but on each couch a Persian and a Theban together. (2) After dinner, while they were drinking, the Persian who was sharing the same couch with him asked Thersander in the Greek tongue where he was from. Thersander answered that he was from Orchomenus. Then the Persian said: “Since you have eaten at the same board with me and you have shared the same cup with me, I would like to leave a memorial of my belief [...].”

5.2 *Arr. An. VII 11.8–9: the Opis Banquet after the mutiny of the army and Alexander III's highly evocative speech to the Macedonians (An. VII 8–10)*

(8) Ἀλέξανδρος δὲ ἐπὶ τούτοις θυσίαν τε θύει τοῖς θεοῖς οἷς αὐτῷ νόμος καὶ **θοίνην δημοτελῆ ἐποίησε, καθήμενός** τε αὐτὸς καὶ πάντων καθήμενων, **ἀμφ' αὐτὸν μὲν Μακεδόνων, ἐν δὲ τῷ ἐφεξῆς τούτων Περσῶν, ἐπὶ δὲ τούτοις τῶν ἄλλων ἐθνῶν** ὅσοι κατ' ἀξίωσιν ἢ τινα ἄλλην ἀρετὴν πρεσβεύοντες, καὶ **ἀπὸ τοῦ αὐτοῦ κρατῆρος αὐτός τε καὶ οἱ ἀμφ' αὐτὸν ἀρπύζοντες ἐσπενδον** τὰς αὐτὰς σπονδὰς καταρχομένων τῶν τε Ἑλλήνων μάντεων καὶ τῶν Μάγων. (9) εὐχετο δὲ τὰ τε ἄλλα [καὶ τὰ] ἀγαθὰ καὶ ὁμόνοιάν τε καὶ κοινωνίαν τῆς ἀρχῆς Μακεδόσι καὶ Πέρσαις. εἶναι δὲ κατέχει λόγος τοὺς μετασχόντας τῆς θοίνης ἐννακισχιλίους, καὶ τούτους πάντας **μίαν τε σπονδὴν** σπεῖσαι καὶ ἐπ' αὐτῇ παιωνίσει.

“(8) On the occasion, Alexander made sacrifices to the gods he usually sacrificed to according to his custom, and offered a public feast. After he had sat down, and also all the others had sat down, - the Macedonians around him, the Persians next to them, and then the other peoples, as many were enjoying precedence for their reputation or some other virtue -, he and those around him, drawing wine from the same vessel, poured the same libations; the Greek seers and the Magi leading the ceremony. (9) He prayed for other blessings, and for the concord and the community of power between Macedonians and Persians. It is said that there were nine thousand guests at the banquet; they all poured the same libation and on that occasion sang the song of victory.”

The Theban δειπνον offers a closer insight of what a Persian banquet was like – or was supposed to be like – in Greek reception. The verb διαπίνοντες reinforces Herodotus' statement that Persians were heavy drinkers (I 133.3–4), and the adjectives ὁμόκλινος, ὁμοτράπεζος, ὁμόσπονδος are to be considered technical terms of royal court etiquette. In fact, the Achaemenid King invited many guests to his banquets, displaying all his πολυδωρία (generosity), but he used to dine alone in a separate hall. After the meal, few were summoned to drink together with him. Thus, the ὁμόσπονδος (libation-sharer) and ὁμοτράπεζος (table-sharer) of the King enjoyed his favour and a pre-eminent place at

court.¹²¹ I suggest that Arrian had in mind “Herodotean royal court terminology” for the description of the banquet at Opis, in which nine thousand guests sit together with Alexander III and those close to him – his privileged Macedonians – participate with him in *μίαν τε σπονδήν*, one same libation, being thus *ὁμοτράπεζοι* and *ὁμόσπονδοι*.¹²² Furthermore, the passage reminds us of another Herodotean image: the Persian “concentric belief” that the importance of the various peoples of the empire is correlated to their position, to their propinquity to the Great King (Hdt. I 134.2). In the banquet, Alexander III represents the centre of power; around him are the Macedonians, then the Persians, and finally all the other folks according to their merits.¹²³

6 Conclusions

In this paper I argued how Alexander III was presented by his historians as a “Herodotean Persian King”, and how the nature of this resemblance to the Achaemenids was the result either of storytelling patterns or of the Macedonian’s *agenda*; or sometimes of both together. Therefore, the passages under examinations can be divided into three categories, according to their dependence on the *Histories*.

The first category comprehends the descriptions which rely heavily on Herodotus, such as Alexander’s unquenchable longing and the Macedonians’ excessive luxury. In fact, they derive from Herodotean tropes which, being already common in the Hellenic mindset of the 4th c. BC, merged into the Alexander-historians’ narratives. Plutarch’s Alexander, although often representing the reversal of the Persian King, belongs to this category as well, for he is openly paralleled to him: differently from Cambyses, he is warmly welcomed in Egypt; in contrast to Xerxes, he unifies Asia and Europe with love and not with fetters. Furthermore, the Macedonian strives to civilise the different populations of the Asiatic plateau.

The second category includes those examples where Herodotus is used by the Alexander-historians in order to exaggerate or explain Alexander’s actual characteristics and his deeds during the Asiatic campaign: i.e., the King of Macedon’s strenuous efforts to master nature, and his hybristic desire to overcome every boundary. These two incidents reflect Alexander III’s majestic projects and his genuine plans to compete against the Achaemenids, but they were overstated in their descriptions through references to Herodotean images. A clear example is the staging of the relationship between Parmenio and Alexander:

121 BRIANT, *From Cyrus* (n. 27), 308.

122 See also Plu. *Mor.* 329EF: ἐφ’ ἐστίας κοινῆς καὶ τραπέζης, ἑκατὸν Περσίδας νύμφας, ἑκατὸν νυμφίους Μακεδόνας καὶ Ἕλληνας, (“[Alexander brought together] at one common table a hundred Persian brides and a hundred Macedonian and Greek bridegrooms”). The passage is influenced by the stoic idea of the world brotherhood: Alexander is portrayed while unifying in marriage Macedonian and Greek men with Persian women, so to become one same community, one family. There are also two references to Herodotus’ *Histories*: first, during the wedding banquet, they all sit ἐφ’ ἐστίας κοινῆς καὶ τραπέζης, being all *ὁμοτράπεζοι*; secondly, a comparison between Xerxes and Alexander is put forward. They both wanted to bring together Asia and Europe, but the former failed, because he tried with the construction of a bridge, while the latter succeeded, for he tried with love and with the bond of wedlock. It is worth noting that the chastising of the Hellespont offers to the Chaeronean the prompt to compare the Macedonian and the Persian King in two occasions, which always serve as a reproach for the latter.

123 See E. BADIAN, “Alexander the Great and the Unity of Mankind”, *Historia* 7 (1958), 429; BRIANT, *From Cyrus* (n. 27), 311; HARRISON, “Oliver” (n. 34), 227.

on many occasions, the old general is presented as Alexander's unheeded adviser under the sway of the Herodotean Artabanus; a well known literary device used with the purpose of highlighting the contrast between the two.

To the third category I ascribe all the depictions of Alexander III and of the events occurred during the Persian campaign which, although can be juxtaposed to Herodotean descriptions of the Achaemenids, are due to a shared system of values both by the Macedonians and the Persians, such as the primary role of the king's horse and of the cavalry, and the transplant of populations into far regions.

Concluding, in the Alexander-historians' narratives we find Herodotean patterns which have been reworked for the purpose of the account of Alexander III's campaign against Persia. The King of Macedon performed heroic actions that no one had attempted before him, and the historians needed literary models to approach the new subject. Herodotus' fame and the common narrative-themes, such as the clash between Persia and Greece, the geographical setting of the Achaemenid Empire, and the sense of uniqueness¹²⁴ of the narrated deeds, seem to have offered a valuable source of inspiration, and a frame of reference into which they could place, explain and describe the Macedonian conquest. Therefore, the unprecedented deeds of Alexander III became more intelligible and, at the same time, subject to praise or veiled criticism, by being set alongside the Persians' monumental achievements or their misbehaviour respectively.

Presumably, Alexander III himself read the *Histories*: they represented a guide-book for his expedition to the East, from both a geographical and ethnographic point of view.¹²⁵ Furthermore, as he followed in the footsteps of Achilles and Protesilaus, Greek heroes of the Homeric poems, in the Herodotean narrative he was able to find Persian models to imitate in Cyrus, the father of the Persians described with very positive tones, and in Darius I, with his curiosity and his naval reconnaissance mission from India to the Suez Canal. The appropriation of some traits of the two brightest examples of Great Kings could have helped him be accepted by the Iranian population, and convince his fellow countrymen of the rightness of his choices. In other words, he exploited the similarities between the Macedonians and the Persians in order to reach his goals.

It follows that, in the Alexander-historians, Alexander III's image as a King of Asia can be perceived as a Herodotean one or a reverse of it. However, this is in terms of literary reception; in reality, it is worth remembering that Philip II's son was not "the last of the Achaemenids": what features, customs, and institutions of the Persian Empire he kept and adopted, were due to a "choice of need", the necessity to go further in his campaign.

124 Cf. Hdt. I 1 and Arr. *An.* I 12.4–5.

125 VASUNIA, *Gift* (n. 109), 256.

Poseidippos, Ptolemy and Alexander^{*}

Sabine Müller (Kiel)

Alexander and the Persian campaign were a prime theme of the Hellenistic culture of commemoration and also central to the discursive strategies of Ptolemaic representation. The legitimacy of the empire's founder, Ptolemy I, largely rested with his association with Alexander and his own participation in the conquest of the Achaemenid Empire.¹ Having been one of Alexander's closest and oldest friends,² most trusted generals and one of his *new men* who made a distinguished career after the elimination of the *old guard*, Ptolemy could claim to have made an important contribution to the Macedonian victories and thus was justified to share in Alexander's inheritance. This was exactly what he did writing his history of Alexander's campaigns highlighting, in parts exaggerating and redefining his own role. Appropriately, Curtius comments that Ptolemy was not inclined to hide his light under a bushel.³ He depicted himself as Alexander's predestinated successor,⁴ a most capable general and one of Alexander's right-hand men – besides Hephaistion. Obviously,

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- 1 Cf. S. MÜLLER, "Poseidippos of Pella and the Memory of Alexander's Campaigns at the Ptolemaic Court", in: W. Heckel, S. Müller and G. Wrightson (eds.), *The Many Faces of War in the Ancient World*, Cambridge 2015, 135–165; S. MÜLLER, "Herrschaftslegitimation in frühhellenistischen Dynastien", in: D. Lambach et al. (eds.), *Politische Herrschaft jenseits des Staates. Zur Transformation von Legitimität in Geschichte und Gegenwart*, Wiesbaden 2011, 156–157; S. BARBANTANI, "Idéologie royale et littérature de cour dans l'Égypte Lagide", in: I. Savalli-Lestrade, I. Cogitore and M. Amandry (eds.), *Des rois au prince: Pratiques du pouvoir monarchique dans l'orient hellénistique et romain, IV^e siècle avant J.-C. – II^e siècle après J.-C.*, Stendhal/Grenoble 2010, 231; S.A. STEPHENS, "Ptolemaic Alexandria", in: J.J. Clauss and M. Cuypers (eds.), *A Companion to Hellenistic Literature*, Oxford 2010, 49; R. HUNTER, "Notes on the *Lithika* of Posidippus", in: B. Acosta-Hughes, E. Kosmetatou and M. Baumbach (eds.), *Labored in Papyrus Leaves: Perspectives on an Epigram Collection Attributed to Posidippus (P. Mil. Vogl. VIII 309)*, Cambridge, Mass./ Washington D.C. 2004, 98. See in general A. CHANIOTIS, *War in the Hellenistic World: A Social and Cultural History*, Oxford/Malden 2005, 57–77; M.M. AUSTIN, "Alexander and the Macedonian Invasion of Asia: Aspects of the Historiography of War and Empire in Antiquity", in: J. Rich and G. Shipley (eds.), *War and Society in the Greek World*, London/New York 1993, 197–223. On the participation of Alexander's "partners in conquest" see W. HECKEL, "A King and His Army," in: W. Heckel and L.A. Tritle (eds.), *Alexander the Great: A New History*, London/Chichester/Malden 2009, 69–82.
- 2 Plu. *Alex.* 10.3; Arr. *An.* III 6.5–6. Vgl. W. HECKEL, *Who's Who in the Age of Alexander the Great*, Oxford/Malden 2006, 235.
- 3 Curt. IX 5.21: *scilicet gloriae suae non refragatus*.
- 4 Cf. S. MÜLLER, *Alexander, Makedonien und Persien*, Berlin 2014, 78–90; T. HOWE, "Alexander in India: Ptolemy as Near Eastern Historiographer", in: T. Howe, and J. Reames (eds.), *Macedonian Legacies: Studies in ancient Macedonian history and culture in honor of Eugene N. Borza*, Claremont 2008, 215–216.

Ptolemy and Hephaistion had been very close friends. Ptolemy seems to have been fond of him as he did his best to commemorate him in a very favorable way.⁵ Writing his history on the Macedonian campaigns, he stressed Hephaistion's loyalty and skills and carefully defended him (as well as himself) against any reproaches: Every time something went wrong or could at least be regarded as a problematic situation, according to Ptolemy's version, they seem to have been both absent, hence not to blame.⁶

Alexander was depicted by Ptolemy in an artificially idealized way as a modest and generous ruler and brilliant commander.⁷⁸ It was certainly an unrealistic art image that might not have had much in common with the real Alexander he had known.⁹ However, it served its ideological purpose.

Ptolemy had another reason for referring intensely to the idealized memory of Alexander: He had robbed Alexander's corpse as an imperial key token and buried it in his realm, thereby demonstrating that he fulfilled the duty of Alexander's (true) successor.¹⁰ Being Alexander's final resting place also made Ptolemy's satrapy the ideological core of the world ruled by the Macedonians.¹¹ By establishing a cult for the deified Alexander who was also separately honoured as Alexandria's *ktistes*, Ptolemy emphasized Alexander's importance for him and his legitimization.¹² In consequence, the positive commemoration of Alexander and his deeds was crucial to his self-conception, political justification as well as to the public image of his residence.

As Ptolemy's successors preserved the guidelines of his ideology and propaganda, the positive invocation of Alexander kept on being at the heart of the Ptolemaic empire, ideology, and self-representation. Especially the presence of Alexander's mortal remains transferred from Memphis to Alexandria under the reign of either Ptolemy I or his son Ptolemy II was a key factor concerning his symbolic role.¹³ Ptolemy IV even designed a new grave-

5 Cf. S. MÜLLER, "Ptolemaios und die Erinnerung an Hephaistion", *Anabasis* 3 (2013), 75–92.

6 Cf. MÜLLER, "Ptolemaios" (n. 5), 444.

7 See Arr. *An.* VII 28.1–4.

8 Cf. A. ERSKINE, "Life after Death: Alexandria and the Body of Alexander", *G&R* 49 (2002), 165, 172–173; A.B. BOSWORTH, *The Legacy of Alexander the Great: Politics, Warfare and Propaganda under the Successors*, Oxford 2002, 246–248; G. HÖLBL, *Die Geschichte des Ptolemäerreiches: Politik, Ideologie und religiöse Kultur von Alexander dem Grossen bis zur römischen Eroberung*, Darmstadt 1994, 1; M. LIANOU, "The Role of the Argeadai in the Legitimation of the Ptolemaic Dynasty: Rhetoric and Practice", in: E. D. Carney and D. Ogden (eds.), *Philip II and Alexander the Great: Father and Son, Lives and Afterlives*, Oxford 2010, 125–128.

9 Vgl. H. BERVE, *Das Alexanderreich auf prosopographischer Grundlage*, II, Munich 1926, 334; A. ERSKINE, "Culture and Power in Ptolemaic Egypt: The Museum and Library of Alexandria", *G&R* 42 (1995), 41; J. ROISMAN, "Ptolemy and his Rivals in his History of Alexander", *CQ* 34 (1984), 383–385.

10 Paus. I 6.1–3; Curt. X 10.20; Ael. *VH* XII 64; Str. XVII 1.8; Arr. *Succ.* 25; Just. XIII 4.6; D.S. XVIII 28.3–5. Cf. S. MÜLLER, "Inventing traditions – Genealogie und Legitimation in den hellenistischen Reichen", in: H. Brandt, K. Köhler and U. Siewert (eds.), *Genealogisches Bewusstsein als Legitimation. Inter- und intragenerationelle Auseinandersetzungen sowie die Bedeutung von Verwandtschaft bei Amtswechseln*, Bamberg 2009, 63–64.

11 Cf. G. WIRTH, *Der Kampfverband des Proteas: Spekulationen zu den Begleitumständen der Laufbahn Alexanders*, Amsterdam 1989, 201; ERSKINE, "Culture" (n. 9), 41.

12 Cf. HÖLBL, *Geschichte* (n. 8), 85–87; ERSKINE, "Life" (n. 8), 175.

13 Ptolemy I: D. S. XVIII 28.3–4; Str. XVII 1.8. Ptolemy II: Paus. I 7.1. Uncertain: Curt. X 10.20. On this crucial time see also A.B. BOSWORTH, *The Legacy of Alexander the Great. Politics, Warfare and Pro-*

site for Alexander and the deceased Ptolemies, stressing the allusion of a dynastic bond.¹⁴ Thus, Alexander remained an outstanding symbol in the language of power of the Ptolemies, physically united with the dead ones and ideologically bonded with the living.

Apparently because of the impact of this image created by the Ptolemaic ideology indicating that the residence was inextricably linked with the memory of Alexander, he was also the key figure dominating the reception of Ptolemaic Alexandria in the modern after-life. The supposed shadowy presence of his lost grave and mummy inspired novelists of the 20th century, for example Lawrence Durrell in his *Alexandria Quartet*: “Its spiritual centre was the forgotten site of the Soma where once the confused young soldier’s body lay in its borrowed Godhead”.¹⁵ The search for Alexander’s tomb is still one of the current issues in the popular reception of Alexandria.¹⁶

The so-called Milan Papyrus, discovered in 1992 and first edited in 2001, cast fresh light on the way Alexander and his campaigns were conceived and represented in poetry written at the court of the Ptolemies.¹⁷ (Mis)used as a mummy wrap, the papyrus roll from Egypt dated to the late third century BC, contains 112 often heavily fragmented Greek epigrams arranged in ten different sections.¹⁸ Two of the epigrams were previously known and attributed to the Macedonian epigrammatist Poseidippos of Pella working at the court of Ptolemy II and Ptolemy III.¹⁹ Hence, the editors accepted him as the author of all epigrams of the papyrus, followed by the majority of scholars.²⁰ Labeled as a Hellenistic poetry book,²¹ perhaps a representative collection of Poseidippos’ epigrams, the discovery of the Milan papyrus helped him out of the shadow of his more famous colleagues Callima-

paganda under the Successors, Oxford 2002.

14 Cf. S. MÜLLER, *Das hellenistische Königspaar in der medialen Repräsentation. Ptolemaios II. und Arsinoë II.*, Berlin/New York 2009, 250.

15 L. DURRELL, *The Alexandria Quartet*, New York 1985² (*Justine*, 40). Cf. S. MÜLLER, “Der Mythos Alexandria und die vergessene Abkunft der Ptolemäer“, in: D. Quintern and V.C. Paulus (eds.), *Entführung in den Serail. Interdisziplinäre Beiträge zum Orientalismus*, Berlin 2008, 13–14.

16 Cf. A. M. CHUGG, *The Lost Tomb of Alexander the Great: The Two Thousand Year Obsession to find the Lost Conqueror*, London 2006, 141–269.

17 There are vast publications on Poseidippos and the Milan Papyrus. Cf. the annual overviews “Il nuovo Posidippo” by F. ANGIÒ in *SEP*.

18 On stones (*lithika*), omens (*oionoskopika*), dedications (*anathematika*), epitaphs (*epitumbia*), statues (*andriantopoiika*), horse-racing (*hippika*), shipwrecks (*nauagika*), cures (*iamatika*), and characters (*tropoi*). Remnants of the tenth section are visible before the papyrus breaks off. Cf. R. HÖSCHELE, *Die blütenlesende Muse. Poetik und Textualität antiker Epigrammsammlungen*, Tübingen 2010, 148–151; W. SEELBACH, “Poseidippos”, in: H.H. Schmitt and E. Vogt (eds.), *Lexikon des Hellenismus*, Wiesbaden 2005, 863.

19 Cf. HÖSCHELE, *Muse* (n. 18), 150; K.J. Gutzwiller, *A Guide to Hellenistic Literature*, Oxford 2007, 108–109; SEELBACH, “Poseidippos” (n. 18), 863–865. On Poseidippos’ biography see F. ANGIÒ, “Da un epilogo all’altro”, *PP* 376 (2011), 47–49; D.J. THOMPSON, “Posidippus, Poet of the Ptolemies”, in: K.J. Gutzwiller (ed.), *The New Posidippus: A Hellenistic Poetry Book*, Oxford 2005, 269–283.

20 Cf. HÖSCHELE, *Muse* (n. 18) 150–151; G.O. HUTCHINSON, “The New Posidippus and Latin Poetry,” *ZPE* 138 (2001), 1. This *communis opinio* was challenged by some scholars. For an overview cf. HÖSCHELE, *Muse* (n. 18), 150, n. 14; D. PETRAIN, “Gems, Metapoetics, and Value: Greek and Roman Responses to a Third-Century Discourse on Precious Stones,” *TAPA* 135 (2005), 331.

21 See GUTZWILLER, *Guide* (n. 19), 28. This does not necessarily mean that it preserves all of his epigrams. Furthermore, it is uncertain whether the papyrus reflects a compilation supervised by the author himself or by another unknown editor. Cf. HUTCHINSON, “New” (n. 20), 1.

chus and Theocritus. The clear intertextual links connecting the epigrams are seen as an invitation to play the intellectual game of mental mind mapping, a kind of “Ergänzungsspiel”, provided by the “interaction of wordplay and theme”.²²

This paper aims at examining the depiction and symbolism of Alexander and his conquests in the epigrams and the way in which Ptolemaic ideology and legitimization is reflected.

The founder of the dynasty, Ptolemy, created the first official images of Alexander in the Ptolemaic culture. On one hand, there was the deified Alexander, a Dionysos-like conqueror of the East. His portrait with the elephant scalp was shown on the obverse of the early tetradrachms of Ptolemy’s satrapal mints.²³ As previously mentioned, a different portrait of Alexander emerges from Ptolemy’s lost history of the campaigns. Presumably addressed particularly to his Macedonian and Greek court society, Ptolemy seems to have focused on Alexander the commander and conqueror while strategically neglecting Alexander the statesman involved in Persian policy that was unpopular with increasing parts of the Macedonians.²⁴ As a part of his inner circle, Ptolemy had first-hand knowledge of his political problems and seems to have learned from it. He tried to avoid any grievances in his leading circles by avoiding adoption of a mixed style of representation at his court. He rather chose to limit his following into pharaonic footsteps to the Egyptian recipients while preserving a Greek and Macedonian court culture.

While in the fragments of Ptolemy’s history, Alexander is represented as pro-Egyptian respecting local royal traditions and regarding Egypt as special for him,²⁵ there is a tendency to excuse and play down his new regal style with Achaemenid colors in favor of a preference for concentrating on Alexander the warrior king subjecting foreign people rather than imitating foreign traditions. There is also a panhellenic flavor.²⁶ This is no surprise as Ptolemy seems to have made frequent use of Callisthenes’ report with its panhellenic design.²⁷

Ptolemy’s ideological legacy was preserved by his successors Ptolemy II and Ptolemy III. In their time, Alexander became an even more artificial figure. Forming part of another generation, for Ptolemy II, the heir of a multi-cultural autocracy, the historical person Alexander and his political problems will have been remote. He only knew the artificial Alexandrian images of Alexander as the glorified blend of Heracles, Dionysus, and Achilles,²⁸ and

22 D.E. LAVIGNE and A.J. ROMANO, “Reading the Signs: The Arrangements of the New Posidippus Roll”, *ZPE* 146 (2004), 22. Cf. C. FUQUA, “An Internal Ring Composition in Posidippus’ *Lithika*”, *CW* 102 (2008), 4–5.

23 Cf. O. MØRKHOLM, *Early Hellenistic Coinage from the Accession of Alexander to the Peace of Apamea*, Cambridge 1991, 63. See also R. HUNTER, *Theocritus: Encomium of Ptolemy Philadelphus*, Berkeley 2003, 114–115.

24 Curt. X 6.9; X 6.13–4; Just. XIII 2.5–6.

25 Arr. *An.* III 1.1, 4–5.

26 Cf. S. MÜLLER, “Die frühen Perserkönige im kulturellen Gedächtnis der Makedonen und in der Propaganda Alexanders d. Gr.“, *Gymnasium* 118 (2011), 107–108; M. BÖHME, “Das Perserbild in den Fragmenten der Alexanderhistoriker“, in: M. Rathmann (ed.), *Studien zur antiken Geschichtsschreibung*, Bonn 2009, 179–180.

27 Cf. L. PEARSON, *The Lost Histories of Alexander the Great*, New York 1960, 188–211.

28 Cf. MÜLLER, *Hellenistische* (n. 14), 249–250. For example, Ptolemy II was depicted as a kind of Alexander–Heracles–Dionysus on a bronze statuette wearing the elephant scalp, *krepides* and holding a

as the ideal warrior king. These two different figures are combined by the Greek poet Theocritus in his *Encomium for Ptolemy*. Here, Alexander is “the god of the glittering mitra”,²⁹ who brought destruction to the Persians. He is part of Zeus’ drinking company in the house of Olympus sitting next to Ptolemy I, faced by their ancestor Heracles.³⁰ When Heracles leaves, he gives them his weapons.³¹ This is a clear mark of honor and emphasizes their new divine status.³² The ability to carry his weapons demanded superhuman strength. In addition, Theocritus makes clear that there was a close family bond between Heracles and them. Thereby, he stresses the claim that Ptolemy belongs to the same house as Alexander. In addition, Theocritus hints at their military skills for a reason: Alexander’s and Ptolemy’s warfare was their ticket to Olympus.

Interestingly, the image of Alexander in the Milan Papyrus differs from this design of the divine ruler. In the epigrams, Alexander is depicted as protected and favored by the Gods: He appears as a brave commander with reminiscences of a Homeric hero, but not as a god.³³

The subject of the first section of the papyrus, *lithika*, is a collection of marvelous and precious stones.³⁴ As in Theophrastus’ treatise *De lapidibus* written at the end of the 4th century BC and most probably known to Poseidippos,³⁵ the focus is on beauty, delicacy, and ability to refract light as well as on rarity.³⁶

It is uncertain whether the poet describes actual artifacts he had seen in Alexandria – especially in the case of the precious gems – or invented them.³⁷ However, as the elder Pliny and the *Periplus Maris Erythraei* attest in the first century AD, precious stones were imported from Arabia, India and the regions of the Red Sea to Egypt.³⁸ In addition, Pliny

club. Cf. U. HUTTNER, *Die politische Rolle der Heraklesgestalt im griechischen Herrschertum*, Stuttgart 1997, 130. On Dionysus, Alexander, and his entourage see S. CANEVA, “Il coro di re”, *QuadStor* 77 (2013), 167–206. On the Alexander cult see HÖLBL, *Geschichte* (n. 8), 85–87.

29 Theocrit. XVII 19. Alternatively, αἰολομίτρας is interpreted as relating to the “dancing” ends of the Macedonian diadem, cf. HUNTER, *Encomium* (n. 23), 115.

30 Theocrit. XVII 19–27. Cf. HUNTER, *Theocritus* (n. 23), 108–122; HUTTNER, *Politische* (n. 28), 137–145. On the Heraclid descent of the Ptolemies see also Satyrus *FGrH* 631 F 1; P. Oxy. 27.2465. Cf. S. A. STEPHENS, *Seeing Double: Intercultural Poetics in Ptolemaic Alexandria*, Berkeley/London 2003, 123–148.

31 Theocrit. XVII 30–31.

32 Cf. HUNTER, *Theocritus* (n. 23), 122.

33 Cf. S. MÜLLER, “Poseidippos” (n. 1), 135–165.

34 Cf. HÖSCHELE, *Blütenlesende* (n. 18), 158–170; GUTZWILLER, *Guide* (n. 19), 117, 175. See also W. LAPINI, *Capitoli su Posidippo*, Alessandria 2007, 195–206; P. BING, “The Politics and Poetics of Geography in the Milan Posidippus, Section One: On Stones (AB 1–20)”, in: Gutzwiller, *New* (n. 19), 119–140; M. SMITH, “Elusive Stones: Reading Posidippus’ *Lithika* through Technical Writing on Stones”, in: Acosta–Hughes, Kosmetatou and Baumbach, *Labored* (n. 1), 105–117; D. SCHUR, “A Garland of Stones: Hellenistic *Lithika* as Reflections on Poetic Transformation”, in: Acosta–Hughes, Kosmetatou and Baumbach, *Labored* (n. 1), 118–122.

35 Cf. HUTCHINSON, “New” (n. 20), 1. According to SMITH, “Elusive” (n. 34), 107–110, the epigrams give a realistic view of the range and scope of stones available in his time.

36 Cf. PETRAIN, “Gems” (n. 20), 336. Also Pliny will have known Theophrastus’ work on stones. Cf. E.R. CALEY and J.F.C. RICHARDS, *Theophrastus on Stones: Introduction, Greek Text, English Translation, and Commentary*, Columbus 1956, 69.

37 Cf. HÖSCHELE, *Muse* (n. 18), 27–37.

38 Cf. W. WENDRICH et al., “Berenike Crossroads: The Integration of Information”, *JESHO* 46 (2003), 54–62.

mentions that Sulla's stepson Marcus Aemilius Scaurus owned a collection of stones (*daktyliotheka*) as well as Mithradates VI of Pontus.³⁹ Hence, the Ptolemies might have had one, too.⁴⁰

Poseidippos' emphasis is on the origin of the stones. Being resources of the land they come from and taken as booty, the stones symbolize the Macedonian conquest.⁴¹ In addition, as the stones in the *Lithika* are in part spoils, they were linked in the public mind with Alexander.⁴² Symbolizing the extent of his realm, the stones trace his campaigns from the Hydaspes to Egypt:⁴³ "As the ornaments of poetry, this eastern matter showed material spatial practices at work in a cultural domain, for the objects of conquest became imagery of poetry".⁴⁴ Programmatically, the section ends with a prayer to Poseidon for the safety of the lands of the Ptolemies.⁴⁵ The section also moves from stones meant to be gifts for women to stones used by men as well as from "normal" stones to precious, highly crafted stones,⁴⁶ jewels of radiant beauty, interpreted as "expressions of art and the power of rulers, from another perspective".⁴⁷

39 Plin. *Nat.* XXXVII 5.

40 At least, Luc. *Phars.* X 120–122 describes a rich interior decorated with jewels treating Cleopatra's palace. however, this description is highly biased and thus to be treated with caution. E. LELLI, "I gioielli di Posidippo", *QuadUrban* 76 (2004), 133–134 thinks that the depiction of the precious stones in a kind of secluded treasury is paralleled with the poet's limited courtly audience and that the described artifacts were inspired by the adornment of the clothes of the Ptolemaic court society.

41 Cf. É. PRIoux, "Visite au cabinet des gemmes. Images et idéologie lagides dans un cycle d'épigrammes hellénistiques", in: É. Prioux and A. Rouveret (eds.), *Métamorphoses du regard ancien*, Paris 2010, 30; GUTZWILLER, *Guide* (n. 19), 175; A. KUTTNER, "Cabinet Fit for a Queen: The *Lithika* as Posidippus' Gem Museum", in: Gutzwiller, *New* (n. 19), 141, 146, 152; BING, "Politics" (n. 34), 124. On the geopolitical concept of imperial landscapes see W.J.T. MITCHELL, "Imperial Landscape," in: W.J.T. Mitchell (ed.), *From Landscape and Power*, Chicago 1994, 5–34. On Hellenistic geopoetics see W.G. THALMANN, *Apollonius of Rhodes and the Spaces of Hellenism*, New York/Oxford 2011, 191–198.

42 Cf. HÖSCHELE, *Muse* (n. 18), 158; BING, "Politics" (n. 34), 124; SCHUR, "Garland" (n. 34), 121.

43 Cf. HÖSCHELE, *Muse* (n. 18) 157; C. FUQUA, "Two Aspects of the *Lithika*", *CPh* 102 (2007), 287–290; PETRAIN, "Gems" (n. 20), 345–346; BING, "Politics" (n. 34), 124.

44 Cf. B.D. SCHILDGEN, "Wonders on the Border: Precious Stones in the Comedy", *Dante Studies* 113 (1995), 132.

45 B. ACOSTA-HUGHES and S.A. STEPHENS, *Callimachus in Context: From Plato to the Augustan poets*, Cambridge 2012, 155. Cf. FUQUA, "Two" (n. 43), 288; R. HUNTER, "Notes on the *Lithika* of Posidippus", in: Acosta-Hughes, Kosmetatou and Baumbach, *Labored* (n. 1), 95–97; C. MELIADÒ, "Posidippo, l'epos ellenistico e la propaganda Tolemaica", *ARF* 6 (2004), 204.

46 Cf. LAVIGNE and ROMANO, "Reading" (n. 22), 22. According to E. RUSH, "Gems, Gender, and the Commodization of Women in Posidippus' *Lithika*", *CAMWS*, Los Angeles 2012 (07E2.Rush.doc), the gendered connotations of the stones brought gems and women "into sharp focus under the male desiring gaze". Hence, women are commodified and objectified. This seems to be a rather harsh interpretation. It is also not too convincing as the focus is of the change of owner of the stones (making love not war anymore). FUQUA, "Internal" (n. 22), 11 states that there are two sections on women and feminine qualities in the *lithika* and one emphasizing male, royal power. In sum, there is no tendency visible to denigrate women in the epigrams. Rather, female members of the Ptolemaic house are praised and set in a favorable light.

47 Cf. FUQUA, "Internal" (n. 22), 4, 9: "royal power and patronage of the arts". Cf. also PETRAIN, "Gems" (n. 20), 344–345.

Epigram 4 describes a gem with an image of Darius, apparently set in a bracelet.⁴⁸ A certain Mandene or Mandane is mentioned as its perhaps former or present owner:

“Seeing the grey [stone]
 [...] of Darius [... engraver of] gems [...]
 [a ray] shining like the moon [... ..]
 [...] with the lamp [...] all night [... ..]
 and the Persian stone fastened with gold
 Mandene hung as a gift from her desirable arm.”

The learned recipients are invited to draw their own conclusions about the identity of these persons. Mandene may have been a contemporary noble lady. Alternatively, given the importance of Xenophon and especially Herodotus for the Alexander historiographers and Ptolemaic culture,⁴⁹ she might be identified with Mandane, the mother of Cyrus the Great, mentioned by them.⁵⁰ As Cyrus II was exemplary for Alexander as a royal Persian role model,⁵¹ Poseidippos’ Mandane may contrast past and present of the Persian Empire: the beginning and the end.⁵² In the Macedonian interpretation, this would mean that the Persian Empire started well ruled by a good king, then gradually declined and experienced a happy ending when it was overtook or even saved by another good ruler: Alexander. This idea would have suited Alexander’s own propagandistic efforts to style himself as following into Cyrus II’s footsteps.

Epigram 8 describes a gem prepared for a golden chain, probably a Persian man’s necklace or pectoral:⁵³

“No neck or finger of any woman wore this carnelian
 but it was prepared for a golden chain,
 this lovely gem with the emblem of Darius – and under him
 an engraved chariot is spread out to the length of a span –,
 with light coming from below. And it defeats the rubies of India,
 when put to the test, with radiant beams of equal strength.
 The circumference measures [three] spans. And this too is a marvel,
 that no watery mist spreads over the wide mass [from within].”

Poseidippos’ audience seems to have been invited to identify Darius on his chariot with one of the famous bearers of this name: Darius I evoking the panhellenic features of Alexan-

48 Cf. K.J. GUTZWILLER, “The Literariness of the Milan Papyrus or ‘What Difference a book?’”, in: Gutzwiller, *New* (n. 19), 300.

49 Cf. MÜLLER, “Herrschaftslegitimation” (n. 1), 139–140.

50 Hdt. I 107–108; Xen. *Cyr.* I 2.1.

51 Str. XI 11.4. Cf. MÜLLER, “Frühen” (n. 26), 113–115.

52 Cf. MÜLLER, “Poseidippos” (n. 33).

53 Cf. GUTZWILLER, “Literariness” (n. 48), 303. KUTTNER, “Cabinet” (n. 41), 152, 154 suggests that this may have been the usual feminizing of Persian rulers as bejeweled kings, hence examples of the Greek stereotype of the weak decadent Eastern monarch. However, this is not necessarily the case. According to Plutarch (*Alex.* 32), Alexander attached a bejeweled Eastern neckpiece to his battle helmet. Demetrios Poliorcetes also possessed jewelry: His daughter Stratonice dedicated his golden necklace, probably also ankle bracelets and armlets, at Delos, cf. G.H. MACURDY, “A Note on the Jewellery of Demetrius the Besieger”, *AJA* 36 (1932), 27–28.

der's propaganda or Darius III, his actual opponent. Perhaps the recipients were also free to imagine that the gem had once formed part either of the Achaemenid treasuries or of the property of a high-ranking Persian noble.⁵⁴ The Macedonian victory is expressed by the fact that the precious gem changed hands and became a token of conquest. The engraved image emphasizes this message: The iconography of victory is overshadowed by the well-known fact of the Persian defeat.⁵⁵ Once having been a sign of the victorious warrior king, Darius on his chariot becomes a marker of the political change transforming the limits of the Macedonian rule. The rubies of India mentioned refer to another result of the victory: the Macedonian access to the luxury trade with India and Arabia.⁵⁶

The message of epigram 8 highlighting the change of power is comparable to epigram 13 describing a stone with an engraved Persian lion:

“The stone is [deceptive] when it is anointed,
[a light] spreads over the whole surface, [a beguiling] marvel.
But when [the surface] is dry, all at once an [engraved] Persian [lion]
flashes as it reaches for the beautiful sun.”

This Persian lion is transformed into a metaphor of the victory of Alexander, the Argead descendant of Heracles.⁵⁷ Its connection with the sun may refer to the image of the heavenly sent fortunes of war symbolized by sunrays. These sunbeams accompany only the chosen ones.⁵⁸ Interestingly, we find exactly this image in the founding myth of the Macedonian empire preserved by Herodotus: The Temenid Perdikkas I, the forefather of Alexander, took the sunbeams offered to him by the ruler of Upper Macedonia, symbolically transferred them and founded the Argead Empire in Pieria.⁵⁹

In the section on dedications, Alexander is not mentioned explicitly. However, he is memorialized indirectly: In epigram 36, Hegeso, a Macedonian girl, remembers a dream of Arsinoë II, the daughter of Ptolemy I Soter and sister-wife of Ptolemy II. The royal lady appeared as a brave warrior queen returning from the battlefield.⁶⁰ Hegeso dedicates her scarf to her to wipe away the sweat:

54 E. KOSMETATOU, “Poseidippos, *Epigr.* 8 AB and Early Ptolemaic Cameos”, *ZPE* 142 (2003), 35–42 suggests that the gem was of Achaemenid origin, showed Darius III and once belonged to him (repeated in E. KOSMETATOU, “On large Gemstones”, *ZPE* 146 (2004), 81–84). See also PRIoux, “Visite” (n. 41), 42. However, as it is not even sure that the poet referred to actual objects, nothing can be deduced decisively.

55 Cf. FUQUA, “Two” (n. 43), 284; KUTTNER, “Cabinet” (n. 41), 154. See also FUQUA, “Internal” (n. 22), 9: “a symbol of the pride that goes before a fall”.

56 See also SMITH, “Elusive” (n. 34), 110.

57 Cf. PRIoux, “Visite” (n. 41), 42. She also suggests that this was Darius III's seal taken over by Alexander (PRIoux, “Visite” (n. 41), 45–46). He is reported to have used a Macedonian and a Persian seal (Curt. VI 6.6. Cf. J. WIESEHÖFER, *Die 'dunklen Jahrhunderte' der Persis: Untersuchungen zu Geschichte und Kultur von Fars in frühhellenistischer Zeit (330–140 v. Chr.)*, Munich 1994, 43, n. 125). However, it is rather unclear whether Ptolemy possessed one of these. See also LAPINI, *Capitoli* (n. 34), 200.

58 Hdt. IV 5; Dinon *FGrH* 690 F 10 (Cic. *Div.* I 23).

59 Hdt. VIII 137–138. Cf. H. KLEINKNECHT, “Herodot und die makedonische Urgeschichte”, *Hermes* 94 (1966), 134–146.

60 Cf. E.D. CARNEY, *Arsinoë of Egypt and Macedon: A Royal Life*, London/New York 2012, 91; MÜLLER, *Hellenistische* (n. 14), 216–229; GUTZWILLER, *Guide* (n. 19), 196; K.J. GUTZWILLER, *Poetic Garlands:*

“To you, Arsinoe, to provide a cool breeze through its folds,
 is dedicated this scarf of fine linen from Naucratis.
 With it, beloved one, you wished in a dream to wipe the pleasant perspiration
 after a pause from busy toils.
 Thus you appeared, Brother-loving one, holding in your hand the point of a spear
 and on your arm, Lady, a hollow shield.
 And at your request the stripe of white material
 was dedicated by the maid Hegeso of Macedonian stock.”

Resembling Athena Promachos, Arsinoë II recalls Alexander's panhellenic propaganda and conquest associating her father with him in victory.⁶¹ She may also recall Ptolemy II's involvement in Greek affairs. This association with her husband-brother would suit the alternative association of the warlike Ptolemaic goddess with an armed Kypris–Aphrodite.⁶²

As Arsinoë recovers from an apparently hard and exhausting fight, a central element of the legitimization of the Successors is emphasized: their participation in the conquests. This associates her again with the deeds of Alexander. Another thing their artificial figures had in common might be the sweetness of the sweat mentioned in the epigram. Sweet-smelling sweat is a sign of divinity and also attested for the – posthumously deified – Alexander.⁶³ In addition, Hegeso dedicated her scarf to a cult statue and sweating cult statues are a common sign of divine power at work,⁶⁴ mostly in the context of war as another epigram of the Milan Papyrus shows.⁶⁵

Hellenistic Epigrams in Context, Berkeley 1998, 170–182; STEPHENS, “Ptolemaic” (n. 1), 52–53; S. STEPHENS, “Battle of the Books”, in: Gutzwiller, *New* (n. 19), 237–241; F. ANGIÒ, “Nota all’ep. 36 AB di Posidippo (P. Mil. Vogl. VIII 309, col. VI 10–17)”, *ApP* 50 (2004), 15–17; LAVIGNE, ROMANO, “Reading” (n. 22), 23; M. BAUMBACH and K. TRAMPEDACH, “Winged Words: Poetry and Divination in Posidippus’ *Oionoskopika*”, in: Acosta–Hughes, Kosmetatou and Baumbach, *Labored* (n. 1), 158.

61 In addition, she may also recall Ptolemy Soter's own panhellenic ambitions (D.S. XX 37.1–2). Despite their lack of success, they were a mark of reference in the Ptolemaic culture: Ath. V 33. Cf. MÜLLER, *Hellenistische* (n. 14), 188. On the strategy of enacting the “Myth of Empire” see R. STROOTMAN, *Courts and Elites in the Hellenistic Empires: The Near East after the Achaemenids, c. 330 to 30 BCE*, Edinburgh 2014, 247–263.

62 Arsinoë was the Brother-loving Goddess and had a separate Greek cult as Kypris Zephyritis. Cf. MÜLLER, *Hellenistische* (n. 14), 219–220; HUTCHINSON, “New” (n. 20), 4. See also A. MEEUS, “The Career of Sostratos of Knidos: Politics, Diplomacy and the Alexandrian Building Program in the Hellenistic Period”, in: T. Howe, E.E. Garvin and G. Wrightson (eds.), *Greece, Macedon and Persia: Studies in Social, Political and Military History in Honour of Waldemar Heckel*, Oxford 2015, 143–171, here 152.

63 Plu. *Alex.* 4.4–5. Cf. STEPHENS, “Battle” (n. 60), 239.

64 Ath. XI 97; Poseidipp. *Ep.* 116 AB. Cf. MÜLLER, *Hellenistische* (n. 14), 215–216, 266–279; S. BARBANTANI, “Goddess of Love and Mistress of the Sea: Notes on a Hellenistic Hymn to Arsinoe–Aphrodite”, *AncSoc* 35 (2005), 135–165; S.A. STEPHENS, “For you, Arsinoe”, in: Acosta–Hughes, Kosmetatou and Baumbach, *Labored* (n. 1), 168; P. BING, “Posidippus and the Admiral: Kallikrates of Samos in the Milan Epigrams”, *GRBS* 43 (2002–2003), 257.

65 Cf. BAUMBACH and TRAMPEDACH, “Winged” (n. 60), 147–148. This is illustrated by epigram 30 AB: “A statue that has perspired – what woe for the citizen/and what a snowstorm of spears is on the move./But do summon the god who perspired, and he will push back/the fire against the dwellings and crops of the enemy”. Cf. also I. PETROVIC and A. PETROVIC, “Stop and smell the Statues”, *MD* 51 (2003), 182–184.

In the *Oionoskopika*, “variations on the theme of sign-reading”,⁶⁶ Alexander appears in two epigrams treating omens favorable to him. Epigram 31 recalls Callisthenes’ anecdote that Alexander’s victory at Gaugamela was predicted by the appearance of Zeus’ eagle:

“An eagle swooping from the [clouds] and lightning at the same time
were auspicious victory omens in war
for the Argead kings. And Athene, in front of her temple,
stirred her auspicious right foot from the lead clasp.
Such a portent appealed to Alexander, as he was teeming with fire
against the countless armies of the Persians.”

In contrast to Callisthenes’ version, Poseidippos adds the element of the thunderbolt. He did this for a reason.⁶⁷ In Alexandrian culture, the eagle on the thunderbolt, borrowed from rare coins minted by Alexander,⁶⁸ was a special ideological symbol. Being a kind of “trade-mark” of the Ptolemaic dynasty, it appeared as the standard obverse image on their coins.⁶⁹

The heaviness of Athena’s foot indicates that the undertaking would be difficult. However, she moves her symbolically better right foot. Hence, she will march alongside with Alexander against the Persians.⁷⁰ The panhellenic coloring becomes quite obvious.

Poseidippos might have intended his audience to associate this omen with a statue of Orpheus coming to life mentioned in the reports on the beginning of Alexander’s campaign: The portent of the sweating statue occurred when he set out after having celebrated the Macedonian games established by Archelaus at Dion and offered the traditional sacrifices to Olympian Zeus.⁷¹ This connection of events, probably outlined by Callisthenes, emphasized that the campaign was protected by Zeus. It was also associated with the first successful Argead expansion ever: Dion is situated in Pieria, the very heart of the Macedonian empire where Perdikkas I settled.⁷² According to Alexander’s seer Aristander the sign predicted that Alexander was meant to perform glorious deeds which would cost artists much sweat to celebrate.⁷³ Furthermore, this indicates that the conquest itself would be

66 Cf. LAVIGNE, ROMANO, “Reading” (n. 22), 23. On the structure see D. PETRAIN, “Πρέσβυς: A Note on the New Posidippus (V.6–11)”, *ZPE* 140 (2002), 10.

67 Cf. MÜLLER, *Hellenistische* (n. 14), 185.

68 On the eagle on the thunderbolt on rare coins of Alexander minted in Macedonia, see M.J. PRICE, *The Coinage in the Name of Alexander the Great and Philip Arrhidaeus: A British Museum catalogue*, London 1991, 103–105.

69 Cf. MØRKHOLM, *Early* (n. 23), 66. See also MÜLLER, “Herrschaftslegitimation” (n. 1), 157; LIANOU, “Role” (n. 8), 133. A founding myth even depicts Zeus’ eagle as savior of the infant Ptolemy. Allegedly, the baby was abandoned by Lagos when he realized that Ptolemy was actually the child of Philip II. Suda s.v. Lagos; Ael. *NA* XII 21. Cf. MÜLLER, “Herrschaftslegitimation” (n. 1), 157–158. Other writers mention the rumor that Ptolemy was Philip’s son: Curt. IX 8.22; Paus. I 6.2. Cf. MELIADÒ, “Posidippo” (n. 45), 203. Hence, Zeus was represented as Ptolemy’s foster-father. However, the date of this legend is debated. Cf. MÜLLER, *Hellenistische* (n. 14), 68–69.

70 Cf. BAUMBACH, TRAMPEDACH, “Winged” (n. 60), 149.

71 Plu. *Alex.* 14.5; cf. Arr. *An.* I 11.2.

72 Hdt. VIII 137–138.

73 On Aristander see H. BOWDEN, “The Eagle has Landed: Seers and Omens in the Alexander Historians”, in: T. Howe et al. (eds.), *Greek Historians on Power and Kingship: Persia, Greece and Macedon*, Cambridge 2015 (forthcoming); A. NICE, “The Reputation of the *Mantis* Aristander”, *ActaCl* 48 (2005), 87–102 (exaggerating his importance); HECKEL, *Who* (n. 2), 45–46. On Callisthenes as the original source

painful and hard, too.⁷⁴ On another level, it also implied that Poseidippos works hard to celebrate the glory of Alexander and his army. Hence, he compares himself as a master of his art to the other masters of their specific art: the seer Aristander, the musician Orpheus, and the royal commander Alexander. Thereby, Poseidippos indicates that there are the supreme masters at work who operate on comparable levels. This shows how he defines his own work and role in his cultural and intellectual context.

Epigram 35 seems to link Alexander and his legacy with the Macedonian homeland and Argead past. The Strymon, a river that once marked the border between Macedonia and Thrace, is mentioned:

“A prophet lies beneath the crow, the Thracian hero
Strymon, supreme steward of omens.
This is the title Alexander gave him with his seal, for three times he defeated
the Persians after consulting the voice of his crow.”⁷⁵

It is important to note that Alexander and his seers interpret the omens right while there are also examples of misreading of prophecies in the section:⁷⁶ “reading the epigrams of the οἰωνοσκοπικά has itself been an exercise in reading the signs (...) it is not always obvious to the reader how to decode the puns and signs of the poet”.⁷⁷ Again, Poseidippos makes clear that Alexander was godly chosen and his mission divinely protected: His seers know what to make of the divine signs.

Interestingly, the bird omen and the portent of the statue of Athena are not known from other sources. It is unclear whether Poseidippos recalled less famous omens or invented them.⁷⁸ In any case, they were in accordance with the Ptolemaic perspective on Alexander. Perhaps, Poseidippos arranged and combined elements of Alexander’s legend anew by adding symbols of Ptolemaic ideology.

In the section on statues, the famous Greek sculptor Lysippus from Sicyon plays an important role. He was known for the lifelike quality of his figures and is said to have enjoyed Alexander’s special favor.⁷⁹ Again, it is a matter of debate whether the poet referred to actual objects he saw in Egypt or just assumed that the audience possessed a mental image of the statues as memorable art objects.⁸⁰ In any case, Poseidippos’ approval of Lysippus’

of the references to Aristander see F. LANDUCCI GATTINONI, “L’indovino Aristandro e l’eredità dei Telmessii”, in: M. Sordi (ed.), *La profezia nel mondo antico*, Milano 1993, 123–138; G. WIRTH, *Der Brand von Persepolis: Folgerungen zur Geschichte Alexanders des Großen*, Amsterdam 1993, 322, n. 239.

74 Cf. the interpretation of the portent in Ps.–Callisth. I 42.4–5.

75 GUTZWILLER, *Guide* (n. 19), 172 interprets the cranes flying from Thrace toward Egypt in *Ep.* 22 AB as a reversal of the image in Callimachus’ *Aitia* prologue (fr. 1.13–4).

76 BAUMBACH and TRAMPEDACH, “Winged” (n. 60), 149–150.

77 LAVIGNE and ROMANO, “Reading” (n. 22), 24.

78 Cf. BAUMBACH and TRAMPEDACH, “Winged” (n. 60), 130–131, 148.

79 Plu. *Alex.* 4.1; *Mor.* 335 A–B; Plin. *Nat.* XXXIV 63–64. Cf. O. BOBOU, “Lysippus”, *EAH* (2013), 4194–4195; MÜLLER, *Hellenistische* (n. 14), 187–188; HECKEL, *Who* (n. 2), 155; P. MORENO, “L’immagine di Alessandro Magno nell’opera di Lisippo e di altri artisti contemporanei”, in: J. Carlsen et al. (eds.), *Alexander the Great: Reality and Myth*, Rome 1997, 101–136.

80 Cf. L. PRAUSCELLO, “Sculpted Meanings, Talking Statues: Some Observations on Posidippus 142.12 A–B”, *AJPh* 127 (2006), 513. There were portraits of Alexander in Alexandria that were exposed in the

work will have been in line with the Ptolemaic guidelines on how to perceive the sculptor and his art: Lysippus' famous portrait of Alexander with a spear suited Alexander's image promoted by Ptolemy in his history as well as the Successors' ideology of the spear-won land.⁸¹ Lysippus is said to have even disapproved of the painter Apelles who showed Alexander with a thunderbolt.⁸² As Apelles is reported to have fallen out with Ptolemy, it may be no coincidence that Poseidippos praised his artistic rival Lysippus.⁸³ Living in Alexandria, Poseidippos could probably not fail to notice that it was advisable to be an admirer of Lysippus' art. Epigram 65 focuses on the aspect of the lifelikeness of his statues:⁸⁴

“Lysippus, sculptor of Sicyon, bold hand,
cunning craftsman, fire is in the glance of the bronze
which you made in the form of Alexander. In no way can one blame
the Persians: cattle may be forgiven for flying before a lion.”

Suiting the demands of the Ptolemaic images of Alexander, he is portrayed as superior and leonine.⁸⁵ The Persians show a cowardly attitude. However, denigrating the opponent carried the risk of diminishing the glory of Alexander's victories. Therefore, Poseidippos excused their tendency to flee: Cattle fear the lion. This echoes a Homeric motif.⁸⁶ In addition, the fight between a lion and a bull was a common iconographical code in the ancient Near East. In the epigram, however, it is again the Macedonian lion symbolizing the victory of the Heraclid Argeads.

Lysippus' great skills enabled him to capture Alexander's excellence. While the *téchne* of the sculptor is praised explicitly, the virtue of the model is implicit. In addition, Poseidippos parallels himself with the sculptor indicating that his own masterly talents enabled him to capture Lysippus' brilliance *in words*.⁸⁷ While describing the statue, it comes

great procession of Ptolemy II (Ath. V 33). However, it is uncertain whether they were contemporary. Cf. E. ESPOSITO, “Posidippo, Eronda e l'arte Tolemaica”, *ARF* 6 (2004), 196, 202.

81 Plu. *Mor.* 360 D. Cf. MORENO, “Imagine” (n. 79), 111. M. ZÄHRNT, “Alexanders Übergang über den Hellespont”, *Chiron* 26 (1996), 129–147 suggested that Alexander's famous spear-shot at the Hellespont (D. S. XVII 17.2–3; Just. XI 5.10) was invented in the time of the Successors. On the symbolism of the spear see also S. BARBANTANI, “The Glory of the Spear: A Powerful Symbol in Hellenistic Poetry and Art”, *SCO* 53 (2007), 67–138.

82 Plu. *Mor.* 360 D; Plin. *Nat.* XXXV 92. Cf. HECKEL, *Who* (n. 2), 40; S. MÜLLER, “Lysippos, Apelles und Alexander mit Lanze oder Blitzbündel”, *Beiträge zur Zweiten kleinen Mommsen-Tagung: Ikonotexte – Duale Mediensituationen* (2006) (<http://fb04prometheus8.geschichte.uni-giessen.de>), 12–14; MORENO, “Imagine” (n. 79), 111. The painting was set up in the temple of Artemis at Ephesus.

83 Plin. *Nat.* XXXV 89–90. Cf. HECKEL, *Who* (n. 2), 40.

84 On the lifelikeness as a “Leitmotiv” of the section see LELLI, “Gioielli” (n. 40), 129.

85 Cf. A. SENS, “The Art of Poetry and the Poetry of Art: The Unity and Poetics of Posidippus' Statue-Poems”, in: Gutzwiller, *New* (n. 19), 222. On Heracles in the Ptolemaic ideology see MÜLLER, *Hellenistische* (n. 14), 198–199; Stephens, *Seeing* (n. 30), 123–148; MELIADÒ, “Posidippo” (n. 45), 203; HUNTER, *Theocritus* (n. 23), 116–124; HUTTNER, *Politische* (n. 28), 124–145; HÖLBL, *Geschichte* (n. 8), 89.

86 *Il.* XII 293.

87 Cf. GUTZWILLER, *Guide* (n. 19), 29–30; A. STEWART, “Posidippus and the Truth in Sculpture,” in: Gutzwiller, *New* (n. 19), 185, 205; SENS, “Art” (n. 85), 221; E. KOSMETATOU, “Vision and Visibility: Art Historical Theory paints a Portrait of New Leadership in Posidippus' *Andriantopoiika*”, in: Acosta-

to life. It is no longer a bronze object but a lifelike bronze man.⁸⁸ Poseidippos' skills made the statue come to life.

Summing up, in the Milan papyrus, Alexander is clearly marked out as the legitimating factor of the Ptolemies. The campaigns led by him and the participation of Ptolemy I were at the heart of their ideology justifying their right to rule. Therefore, gem stones taken as booty signifying the change of power from the Persians to the Macedonians, omens predicting the Macedonian victories, or statues depicting Alexander as the victorious warrior serve to illuminate this founding act of the Ptolemaic empire.

The epigrams show Alexander as a god-sent (but not yet divine) warrior and conqueror subduing (not integrating) the Persians. This panhellenic flavored image seems to owe much to the official guidelines on how to remember Alexander by Ptolemy I as a historiographer. However, Alexander's sacral image of the *theos* and *ktistes* of Alexandria will never have been far away. The Alexandrian audience knew about it and will have been free to associate it with the image of the warrior king. Apparently, it was up to the recipients to remember Alexander the way they preferred: either Alexander the warrior king (before the posthumous deification) or Alexander after: the god.

Hughes, Kosmetatou and Baumbach, *Labored* (n. 1), 191, 193.

88 Cf. M.A. TUELLER, "Statues and their Models in Epigram. An Exploration of Nossis and Posidippus" (<http://apaclassics.org/sites/default/files/documents/abstracts/tueller.pdf>).

The East in Curtius Rufus' *Historiae Alexandri Magni*: A Paradoxical Reversion of Standards

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Q. Curtius Rufus, whose work can be dated from the 1st century AD,¹ is often seen as a poor historian dealing more with rhetoric than true history.² A closer analysis of Alexander's portrait shows, however, that it is part of a political and ideological pattern, in which the East is more than just a literary *topos*. My aim is to show that the East is a significant element of what can be called, in the terms of Elizabeth Baynham, "a study of power".³

This paper will consequently focus on Curtius' specific treatment of the Orient *topos* and examine how ethno-geographical descriptions and *mirabilia* found in Curtius are meant not only to entertain his audience or invert standards and values: Curtius' East is actually a place where no limits apply and where transgression, delusion and disorder are key words; a place whose depiction is part and parcel of Curtius' ideological and political "agenda".

1 Ethno-geography and *mirabilia*

The aim of ethno-geographical remarks and *mirabilia* in Curtius' *Historiae* is twofold: they are intended to convey information on the Orient, thus fulfilling a scientific goal; and they also aim at entertaining an audience that expects some exoticism, which is Curtius' second, rhetorical and literary goal. Curtius thus indirectly belongs, on the one hand, to the tradition of those Latin authors specialized in natural sciences or *mirabilia* – such as Pliny the Elder –, taking from Alexander's narrative whatever they may need, and, on the other hand, to

1 Most probably under Claudius or, in my opinion, under Vespasian. For a detailed survey of the problems pertaining to his dates and identity: A. BARZANÒ, "Curzio Rufo e la sua epoca", *MIL* 38 (1985), 65–185, esp. 72–100; E. BAYNHAM, *Alexander the Great: The Unique History of Quintus Curtius*, Ann Arbor, 1998, 201–219.

2 More and more scholars, however, seem now to acknowledge Curtius' historical value, despite some inaccuracies or errors – yet something typical of all ancient historians: e.g. G. RADET, "La valeur historique de Quinte-Curce", *CRAI* 78 (1924), 356–365 (Curtius better source than Arrian on the negotiations between Darius and Alexander after Issus); R.D. MILNS, "The Hypaspists of Alexander III – some problems", *Historia* 20 (1971), 186–195 (on the military reform mentioned at Curt. V 2.1 ff.); A.B. BOSWORTH, "A Missing Year in the History of Alexander the Great", *JHS* 101 (1981), 17–39 (on year 328); A. STEWART, "Diodorus, Curtius, and Arrian on Alexander's Mole at Tyre", *Berytus* 35 (1987), 97–99 (Curtius more precise than Diodorus Siculus); M.J. OLBRYCHT, "Curtius Rufus, The Macedonian Mutiny at Opis and Alexander's Iranian Policy in 324 BC", in: J. PIGOŃ (ed.), *The Children of Herodotus: Greek and Roman Historiography and Related Genres*, Newcastle upon Tyne 2008, 231–252 (reliable facts in Curtius about Alexander's Iranian policy must lead to distinguish them from rhetorical embellishments). For Curtius' statements on his own historical method: Curt. IX 1.34 (reporting more than he believes, but as he heard it); VII 8.11 (fidelity – *fides* – to his sources and to the tradition); IX 5.21 (criticism regarding Ptolemy's account). Cf. n. 76.

3 BAYNHAM, *Alexander* (n. 1), 9.

that of the Roman historians, looking to adorn their books with varied elements (*historia ornata*) in order to draw the attention of their readers: as E. Baynham puts it, the “vast amount of geographical, zoological, and ethnographical detail [is] the result of both the historian’s sources and Greco-Roman literary conventions.”⁴

Looking closer at Curtius’ East, we can see that it includes three main regions: Egypt; the heart of the Persian Empire; and India.⁵ Each of these regions has a specific image in Roman imagination: Egypt, known through Greek literature, and in particular through Herodotus, is also in the 1st century AD a Roman province.⁶ The knowledge Romans possess on Persia is dependent on Greek authors, who depict it as their hereditary enemy, and on the information resulting from campaigns of Roman generals, in particular the ones against the Parthians;⁷ India, finally, is probably the most mysterious area for the Roman reader, country of exotic peoples and scene for both Liber-Dionysos’ and Alexander’s anabasis.⁸

However, these three different regions are a single world, and a source of fantasies for the Romans. The Orient, in Curtius’ *Historiae*, is more imaginary than geographic – a heterotopia, as Foucault would have it.⁹ The East, in Curtius’ narrative of Alexander’s conquests, just like in other works, allows ethnogeographical remarks and digressions on *mirabilia* regarding regions, which are more or less known, and evocative to the Roman imagination. Here, Curtius is following a tradition, that can be traced back to Herodotus, whose *ιστορία* (*historia*) is a mix of ‘history’ and ‘geography’, with *θαύματα* (*mirabilia*) being a significant part of his work.¹⁰ Strabo’s *Geography*, conversely, shows how history and

4 BAYNHAM, *Alexander* (n. 1), 10. On the ethnographical tradition, see R.F. THOMAS, *Lands and Peoples in Roman Poetry: The Ethnographical Tradition*, Cambridge 1982.

5 Egypt: Curt. IV 7–8; Babylonia and Persia: mostly V–VI and X; India: VIII 9–IX 10.

6 Since the 1st century BC On Rome and Egypt, see F. LECOCQ and J. LECLANT (eds.), *L’Égypte à Rome. Actes du colloque de Caen des 28–30 Sept. 2002*, Caen 2008.

7 The Parthian issue raises the imaginations and spirits of almost every general and emperor until Trajan: J.J. POIROT III, *Perception of Classical Armenia: Romano–Parthian relations, 70 BC – 220 AD*, Louisiana State University 2003 [Master’s Thesis] (on Romano–Parthian rivalry during the first two centuries AD). Works on the Trajanic period are numerous: see e.g. F.A. LEPPER, *Trajan’s Parthian War*, London/Oxford 1948.

8 For ancient sources on India in Latin, see J. ANDRE and J. FILLIOZAT, *L’Inde vue de Rome. Textes latins de l’Antiquité relatifs à l’Inde*, Paris 1986. P. GOUKOWSKY, *Essai sur les origines du mythe d’Alexandre (336–270 av. J.–C.)*, II: *Alexandre et Dionysos*, Nancy 1981, offers an in–depth discussion of the link established in the Diadochs time (and then in Rome) between Alexander, Dionysos, and the conquest of India.

9 Compare Caesar’s or Tacitus’ Germany (e.g. Caes. *Gal.* VI 25.1–4; Tac. *Ger.* 44.1, 3; 45, 6–7, 9; 46.3–6; cf. O. DEVILLERS, “Images du Germain dans la *Germanie* de Tacite”, *VL* 182 (2010), 75–84). Hence, I completely agree with D. SPENCER, “Roman Alexanders: Epistemology and Identity”, in: W. Heckel and L.A. Tritle, (eds.), *Alexander the Great: A New History*, Chichester 2009, 250–274, esp. 260, when she states that “The ‘east’ [...] is less a place than a state of mind”. On the concept of heterotopia, see M. FOUCAULT, *Les hétérotopies*, in: M. Foucault, *Le corps utopique, suivi de Les hétérotopies*, Paris 2009, 21–36; on Rome and the East, see W. BALL, *Rome in the East: The Transformation of an Empire*, London 2000; F. MILLAR, *The Roman Near East, 31 B.C.–A.D. 337*, Cambridge/London 1993.

10 This is one of the reasons why I think Curtius’ work should be defined as *historia* rather than *uita* (for more arguments see I. YAKOUBOVITCH, “Les *Histoires d’Alexandre le Grand* de Quinte–Curce: une question de genre”, in: Ch. Amalvi (ed.), *Usages savants et partisans des biographies, de l’Antiquité au XX^e siècle*, [online] 2011, 85–96). On *θαύματα* in Herodotus, see R. THOMAS, *Herodotus in Context: Ethnography, Science and the Art of Persuasion*, Chapter 5. “‘Wonders’ and the natural world : natural

geography can interfere, especially on Alexander's campaign in India, and his work happens to be also a valuable source for ancient historians of Alexander.¹¹

In fact it is no coincidence if the Alexander narrative appears more than once at the crossroads of history and geography: Alexander's campaigns are a unique opportunity for a scientific exploration of the world – just as Napoleon's conquest of Egypt will be much later.¹² His *curiositas* and *cupido noscendi* may even appear as a reason for the conquest of the East.¹³ This “scientific” interest is echoed in Curtius' *Historiae* in several ways.¹⁴ Nevertheless, Curtius is far more critical than Pliny, regarding Alexander's *cupido noscendi*: the journey to Siwah appears to be in fact the mere whim of a king obsessed by his glory and blinded by *hybris*,¹⁵ while the king's desire to see the Ocean is nothing but “obstinate” (*peruicax*), leading him to jeopardize the safety of his army.¹⁶ Curtius develops and elaborates on a basic *topos*, but stresses that this *cupido noscendi* is above all merely *cupido*.¹⁷ Alexander's *cupido noscendi* is thus part of a global and moral analysis of his conquests and rule, which, as we shall see, is reflected in Curtius' ethnogeographical remarks and *mirabilia*.

1.1 The ethno-geographical remarks

Geographic, ethnographic, and ethnogeographical remarks are numerous in the *Historiae*, and several are valuable sources of information – on Macedonian customs for instance. The following description of the Macedonian wedding ritual in book VIII, when Alexander marries the Persian princess Roxane, is thus the only existing one, according to Tarn:

philosophy and historie”, Cambridge 2000, 135–167 ; F. HARTOG, *Le Miroir d'Hérodote: essai sur la représentation de l'autre*, Paris 2001, 356–364. On Curtius and Herodotus: J. BOIREAU, “Conception de l'histoire en Grèce et à Rome. La dimension géographique de l'histoire. Hérodote et Quinte-Curce”, *Caesarodunum* 3 (1969), 143–146; J. BLÄNSDORF, “Herodot bei Curtius Rufus”, *Hermes* 99 (1971), 11–24; W. HECKEL, “One More Herodotean Reminiscence in Curtius Rufus”, *Hermes* 107 (1979), 122–123; cf. BAYNHAM, *Alexander* (n. 1), 17, 46, 86, 88–89, 139.

11 Especially Str. XV–XVII.

12 Of which Ulysses' odyssey may be seen as a kind of paradigm; cf. Cic. *Fin.* V 48.

13 Plin. *Nat.* VIII 44. Intellectual curiosity (*curiositas*) and thirst for knowledge (*cupido noscendi*) can be found extensively, and with a variety of forms, in the philosophical tradition going back to Socrates and Plato (e.g. Cic. *Fin.* V 48; Sen. *Dial.* VIII 5.3). It has become a common place fitted for *sententiae* (e.g. Sen. *Con.* IV 1).

14 Mostly in book IX – in India –, where Alexander sends Nearchus and Onesicritus to explore the Ocean (Curt. IX 9.1; 10.1 and 3), driven by the desire to see (*cupido uisendi*: VI 5.25 ; IX 9.1) what has never before been seen and to learn more (*cupido cognoscendi*: X 1.16; cf. VI 5.25); cf. IV 7.8 (*cupido adevendi*).

15 Curt. IV 7.8. cf. IV 7.29–31. For Alexander's motivations for this journey, see J.E. ATKINSON, *A Commentary on Q. Curtius Rufus Historiae Alexandri Magni, Books 3 and 4*, Amsterdam 1980, 345–346.

16 Curt. IX 9.1. My comments here are based on Carlo M. Lucarini's text in the 2009 Bibliotheca Teubneriana edition of Curtius, and H. Bardon's edition in the Collection des Universités de France. Lucan offers another example of Alexander's *cupido noscendi* viewed with negativity (Luc. X 268–275). This negative perception of *cupido noscendi* is probably influenced by Stoicism, itself ambiguous on that question (I. DIONIGI, “Il desiderio nella cultura classica”, Meeting Rimini, 23 August, 2010 Meeting Rimini is the name of a symposium, here held in 2010: <http://www.meetingrimini.org/default.asp?id=673&item=4962>; “Il desiderio nella cultura classica” is the title of the paper).

17 And *cupido* is opposed to *ratio* (Curt. IX 2.12).

“pater [...] iussit afferri patrio more panem – hoc erat apud Macedonas sanctissimum coeutium pignus – quem diuisum gladio uterque libabat” (“the father ... ordered a loaf of bread to be brought in according to his country’s custom – this among the Macedonians was the most sacred pledge of those contracting marriage – which was cut in two with a sword and tasted by each”).¹⁸

Many of these remarks are relative to the East, as does the description of the oracle of Jupiter in Siwah:

“Hunc, cum responsum petitur, nauigio aurato gestant sacerdotes, multis argenteis pateris ab utroque nauigii latere pendentibus; sequuntur matronae uirginesque patrio more inconditum quoddam carmen canentes, quo propitiari Iouem credunt, ut certum edat oraculum.”

“When an oracle is sought, the priests carry this in a golden boat with many silver cups hanging from both sides of the boat; matrons and maidens follow, singing in the native manner a kind of rude song, by which they believe Jupiter is propitiated and led to give a trustworthy response.”¹⁹

The excursus on India in book VIII, the most detailed in the *Historiae*, is typical of such digressions.²⁰ Curtius offers a geographic overview (§2), then focuses on rivers (§§3–12), seasons (§13), the sea that runs the length of India and the origin of its name (§14), the bark that serves for writing (§15), the fauna (§§16–17), natural resources (§§18–19), the character of men, which is, as everywhere else, affected by the situation of the country (§§20–22), the luxury surrounding monarchs and their palaces (§§23–29), the role of women (§30), and, finally, gymnosophists, astrology, gods and calendar (§§31–37).

Nevertheless, Curtius’ Orient is not a mere opportunity for wonder and curiosity, exoticism and picturesque: these remarks and digressions of ethno-geographical nature – as well as most of the *mirabilia*, as we shall see – do not divert the historian from his purpose. They are often pretexts for moral reflexions developed within the framework of the *mos maiorum*, and are carefully integrated into the general structure of the *Historiae*.²¹ The Macedonian wedding ritual, for instance, is followed by a moralizing comment

“Credo eos qui gentis mores condiderunt parco et parabili uictu ostendere uoluisse iugentibus opes quantulo contenti esse deberent” (“I suppose that those who established the customs of the race wished by a frugal and common food to show to those

18 Curt. VIII 4.27. Apart from Curtius, Tarn only finds three other instances of Macedonian customs in ancient literature (W.W. TARN, *Alexander the Great*, II, *Sources and Studies*, Cambridge 1948, 107); cf. Curt. VI 11.38; VII 1.32–34. The Latin text and English translation of Curtius are from J.C. ROLFE, *Quintus Curtius: History of Alexander*, I–II, Cambridge 1946 (Loeb).

19 Curt. IV 7.24.

20 Curt. VIII 9.2–37. On Curtius and India, among others: J.–D. BERGER, “L’Inde de Quinte-Curce”, *VL* 182 (2010), 20–40; ANDRÉ and FILLIOZAT, *L’Inde* (n. 8), 48 ff., 67–94.

21 On which see I. YAKOUBOVITCH, “Echos, diptyques et effets de bouclage: la construction du portrait d’Alexandre chez Quinte-Curce”, in: J. Trinquier and M. Simon (eds.), *L’Histoire d’Alexandre selon Quinte-Curce*, Paris 2014, 125–138.

who were about to unite their resources with how little they ought to be contented");²²

in his description of the oracle of Jupiter in Siwah, Curtius is careful to leave aside what could make his narrative confusing,²³ and the whole episode is negative and intended to denounce the king's *cupido* and *hybris*;²⁴ and again, the excursus on India is enlightening: Curtius himself notes that *Multa et alia traduntur, quibus morari ordinem rerum haud sane operae uidebatur* ("Also many other things are related, for which it did not seem to be worth while to delay the course of our history": Curt. VIII 9.37). Indeed he overlooks details on the march from Bactra to the Kabul Valley that we find in Arrian (*An.* IV 22.3–4). Furthermore, the digression blends moralism and marvellous, yet develops themes connected to the rest of the narrative, such as rivers, natural resources, description of Indian kings echoing Alexander's "barbarization", and several details are also found in the account of the campaigns.²⁵ This is true for most of the ethnographic, geographic and ethno-geographic remarks in books VIII–X.²⁶ But even more relevant is the fact that the digression on India occurs at a key moment in the narrative of Alexander's anabasis: the excursus cuts book VIII in two parts, while at the same time articulating both of them around the theme of *gloria*, which is activated from the start of the digression (VIII 9.1). Thus Alexander's glory (VIII 9–14) contrasts with the temptation for Orient and signs of barbarization (VIII 1–8).²⁷

We can therefore fully agree with D. Spencer that in Curtius' East, "geographical information offered is no more effective for accuracy, but equally viable as an alternative, discursive, reality".²⁸ Geography, ethnography and ethnogeography are indeed part of a moralizing, political and ideological Roman agenda. Here Curtius departs from most other ancient accounts on Alexander or India.

1.2 The mirabilia

Mirabilia are a second key element, on which Curtius' description of the East is based. Mirabilia are indeed a mandatory feature of ancient historiography when dealing with the East, beginning with Herodotus, as has been pointed out. Yet, the rhetorical and literary dimension of mirabilia, entertainment, must not overshadow their original, complex mean-

22 Curt. VIII 4.28.

23 ATKINSON, *Commentary* (n. 15), 358.

24 Curt. IV 7.8; cf. IV 7.29–31.

25 O. DEVILLERS and A. STOEHR-MONJOU, *Silves latines 2009–2010. Quinte–Curce, Historiae Alexandri, VIII–X. Sidoine Apollinaire*, Carmina, I–VIII, Neuilly 2009, 24–25.

26 J.L. RIESTRA RODRÍGUEZ, "Digresiones geograficas en Quinto Curcio", *Polis* 3 (1991), 137–146, esp. 138, 140.

27 DEVILLERS and STOEHR-MONJOU, *Silves* (n. 25), 20 (O. Devillers emphasizes the similarity of this use of digressions with Sallust's in the *Bellum Iugurthinum*).

28 D. SPENCER, "Perspective and Poetics in Curtius' Gorgeous East", *AClass* 48 (2005), 121–140, esp. 135, about the (false) continuum made by Curtius, from Prometheus' Mount Caucasus to Mount Taurus, and separating Asia along a north–south axis. Though Curtius' information on India is generally more sober than many other historians (Indian nature) and sometimes more precise (Indian kings): BERGER, "L'Inde" (n. 8), 30, 31.

ing. *Mirabilia* have a “double tropism” typical of Greco-Roman imagination:²⁹ on the one hand, *mirabilia* have a sacred, magical, and irrational dimension, creating a gap in the natural world, and telescoping the sacred and the profane; and on the other hand, *mirabilia* are rational, even scientific. A distinction can then be made between *mirabilia* of nature, and *mirabilia* created by humans. However, scholars don’t always agree on the interpretation of *mirabilia* in ancient works, as in the case of Pliny, where both dimensions – rational and irrational – can be found.³⁰

What about Curtius’ *mirabilia* then? Most of them are (super)natural, as is the “noteworthy ... yoke” (*notabile ... iugum*) of the Gordian knot.³¹ Another good example is the Ammon oasis in the Siwah desert. The sanctuary itself is a *mirabile*, a genuine *locus amoenus* contrasting this terrible surrounding desert, where Alexander and his troops almost died.³²

“Tandem ad sedem consecratam deo uentum est. Incredibile dictu, inter uastas solitudines sita, undique ambientibus ramis uix in densam umbram cadente sole contacta est, multique fontes dulcibus aquis passim manantibus alunt siluas. Caeli quoque mira temperies, uerno tepori maxime similis, omnes anni partes pari salubritate percurrit.”

“At length they arrived at the abode consecrated to the god. Incredible to relate, although situated amid the desert wastes, it is so covered on all sides by encircling branches that the sun barely penetrates their dense shade, and many founts of sweet water, flowing in all directions, nourish the woods. A wonderful mildness of climate too, very like the warmth of spring, continues through all seasons of the year with like wholesomeness.”³³

Furthermore, there is another *mirabile* inside this first *mirabile*, the Fountain of the Sun:

“Est et aliud Hammonis nemus; in medio habet fontem – Solis aquam uocant –; sub lucis ortum tepida manat, medio die, cuius uehementissimus est calor, frigida eadem fluit, inclinato in uesperam calescit, media nocte feruida exaestuat, quoque nox propius uergit ad lucem, multum ex nocturno calore decrescit, donec sub ipsum diei ortum assueto tepore languescat.”

“There is also another grove of Ammon; in the middle of it is a fountain – they call it the water of the Sun –; at daybreak its flow is lukewarm, in the middle of the day, which is very hot indeed, the same fount is cold, as the day inclines towards evening

29 I am following here J. THOMAS, “*Mirabilia*. Tropismes de l’imaginaire antique”, in: O. Bianchi and O. Thévenaz (eds.), *Mirabilia : Conceptions et représentations de l’extraordinaire dans le monde antique actes du colloque international, Lausanne, 20–22 mars 2003*, Bern 2004, 1–14, esp. 1–3.

30 See for instance V. NAAS, “Imperialism, *Mirabilia*, and Knowledge: Some Paradoxes in the *Naturalis Historia*”, in: R.K. Gibson and R. Morello (eds.), *Pliny the Elder: Themes and Contexts*, Leiden/Boston 2011, 57–70 (the pursuit of marvels as a factor in the decline of scientific investigation); contra M. BEAGON, “The curious eye of the Elder Pliny”, in: Gibson and Morello (eds.), *Pliny* (n. 30), 71–88 (*mirabilia* and science not mutually exclusive).

31 Curt. III 1.14–15; cf. III 1.16–18. See on this episode ATKINSON, *Commentary* (n. 15), 86–91.

32 Curt. IV 7.10–15.

33 Curt. IV 7.16–17.

it grows warmer, in the middle of the night it boils forth hot, and as the night approaches nearer to dawn, it decreases greatly from its nocturnal heat, until at day-break it cools off to its normal temperature."³⁴

Along with these natural *mirabilia*, Curtius offers a few examples of *mirabilia* created by humans, such as the city of Babylon, founded by the mythical queen Semiramis: the beauty and antiquity of this city deservedly draw the eyes of all (V 1.24) – yet another *topos*.³⁵ The bridge of stone built over the Euphrates, connecting the two parts of the city, is, yet again, a *mirabile* inside the *mirabile*: *Hic quoque inter mirabilia Orientis opera numeratus est* ("This also is counted among the marvels of the Orient": V 1.29). So are the famous hanging gardens of Babylon (V 1.32–35), "a wonder celebrated in the tales of the Greeks" (*uulgatum Graecorum fabulis miraculum*: V 1.32), and resulting from a love story (V 1.35).

But the *mirabilia* of nature can sometimes also be seen as involving, in some respects, a human dimension: Alexander's loosening of the knot, even if it means cutting it with a sword, is a *mirabile* too in some respects – and this *mirabile* is supposed to imply world domination. Again the journey throughout the Siwah desert is a *mirabile* in a sense – and again implying world domination. Lastly, queen Thalestris of the Amazons and her people (Curt. VI 5.24–32), finally, are both subject and object of a *mirabile*, as women warriors. Conversely, Alexander himself is a kind of *mirabile* for Thalestris, who is "firing to visit" the king (*cupidine uisendi regis accensa*: VI 5.25), as the king is to visit the Ammon oracle or to see the Ocean. *Mirabilia* thus lie at the junction between the supernatural and the human.

Furthermore, the episode of the Gordian knot – the legendary origin of the knot (III 1.14) and the description of the knot itself –, the visit to the Ammon oracle – the description of the oasis, of the people living there (IV 7.18–21), of the Fountain of Sun, and of the oracular ritual (IV 7.23–24) –, as well as the excursus on India, show that ethno-geographical remarks and *mirabilia* are linked. And like ethno-geography, *mirabilia* in Curtius are more than just an occasion for wonder and curiosity: they are considered from a moralizing perspective, within the framework of the Roman *mos maiorum*. In this respect, they may be compared to Curtius' use of *sententiae*.³⁶ Thus the natural resources of India, and the Indian king's wealth, proportional to these resources, are in fact a pretext for a moral condemnation, including the lavish use of wine and drowsiness (Curt. VIII 9.23, 29–31: see below) – and, finally, of Alexander's orientalization. Thus, too, the condemnation of *cupido* (Ancient Greek πόθος), which is reflected in several *mirabilia* episodes, such as the Gordian knot (III 1.16: *cupido incessit animo sortis eius explendae*; "the desire entered Alexander's mind of fulfilling that prophecy"), which ends ambiguously with the word of Alexander (III 1.18). Furthermore, the cutting of the yoke's hidden knots may also be read as a programmatic episode that foreshadows the weakening of military discipline and morals and, finally, the loss of *mos maiorum* – which is one of the bases of Macedonian (Roman) society.

The Siwah episode offers another striking example, as the whole episode is negative and intended to denounce the king's *cupido* and *hybris*, as well as the priests' duplicity and

³⁴ Curt. IV 7.22.

³⁵ Curt. V 1.24–35.

³⁶ On which see A. CUTTICA, *Le sententiae in Curzio Rufo: Dallo stile alla cultura di un'epoca*, Florence 1998.

the manipulation of signs from heaven; as well as to criticize Alexander's heroism and yearning for divinization. The episode begins with the following statement:

“ingens cupido animum stimulabat adeundi Iouem, quem generis sui auctorem, haud contentus mortali fastigio, aut credebat esse aut credi uolebat” (“a great longing plied spurs to the king's purpose of visiting Jupiter, whom he, not content with mortal eminence, either believed, or wished men to believe, to be the founder of his race”).³⁷

And it ends with the following judgement:

“Vera et salubri aestimatione fidem oraculi uana profecto responsa eludere uideri potuissent; sed fortuna, quos uni sibi credere coegit, magna ex parte audios gloriae magis quam capaces facit.”

“In the light of a genuine and entirely sane appraisal, these unquestionably vague responses of the oracle would have brought ridicule upon its trustworthiness, but Fortune makes those whom she has forced to have confidence in herself alone more eager as a rule for glory than big enough to have room for it.”³⁸

As for the Thalestris episode that ends book VI's fifth chapter, it is immediately followed by a long moralizing judgement opening chapter 6 (VI 6.1–12). If Thalestris is a kind of *mirabile* to Alexander, Thalestris is, conversely, disappointed by “his person, which did not by any means correspond to the fame of his exploits” (*habitus eius haudquaquam rerum famae parem*: VI 5.29).³⁹ *Mirabilia* are much more than mere *topoi* and exoticism: there is indeed what can be called a hermeneutics of *mirabilia*,⁴⁰ which in Curtius concerns appearance, reality, and inversion.

2 The East: from antithesis to inversion

Curtius' ethno-geography and *mirabilia* are part of a rhetorical *topos* based on an antithesis between the “civilized” and the “barbarian” world – a *topos* which also has a political meaning, since it is a structuring element of the Roman mind. Appearance, however, as has just been suggested about *mirabilia*, is not always reality, and the antithesis might well be an inversion. Ethno-geography and *mirabilia* have in fact a triple aim: a “scientific” one, a rhetorical one – as already highlighted –, and an ideological one as well. Both history and geography in the Roman Empire are political – as is Curtius' portrait of Alexander.⁴¹

37 Curt. IV 7.8.

38 Curt. IV 7.29; cf. IV 7.30–31.

39 Cf. Curt. III 12.16–17: Sisigambis mistaking Hephaestion for Alexander, for the same reason.

40 THOMAS, “*Mirabilia*” (n. 29), 3–4.

41 See M.-P. ARNAUD-LINET, *Histoire et politique à Rome: Les historiens romains, III^e siècle av. J.-C. – V^e siècle ap. J.-C.*, Rosny 2001; C. NICOLET, *L'inventaire du monde. Géographie et politique aux origines de l'Empire romain*, Paris 1988 (see in particular chapter 5, “Représentation de l'espace: l'œuvre géographique d'Agrippa”, 103–131, for a discussion on how Agrippa's world map brings together science, myth and politics).

2.1 An antithesis of the "civilized" world

Curtius, like other Roman writers, and especially Roman historians, contrasts in his work the "civilized" – Macedonian, or, *mutatis mutandis*, Roman – world with the world of the "Barbarians". Such a contrast is not only highly rhetorical, but, as a semantic study shows, essentially ideological.⁴² Moreover, this contrastive *topos* literally structures Roman identity.⁴³

One of the most important motifs of this antithesis is that of barbarian luxury and opulence, as opposed to Macedonian frugality, simplicity and discipline, in a way which echoes Cato's thought. The presents offered by Orsines to Alexander are typical of barbarian opulence:

"Is regi cum omnis generis donis, non ipsi modo ea, sed etiam amicis eius daturus, occurrit. Equorum domiti greges sequebantur currusque argento et auro adornati, pretiosa supellex et nobiles gemmae, aurea magni ponderis uasa uestesque purpureae, et signati argenti talentum III milia."

"He met the king with gifts of every kind, intending to give presents not only to Alexander but to his friends as well. Troops of tamed horses followed him and chariots adorned with silver and gold, costly furniture and splendid gems, golden vases of great weight, purple vestments, and 3000 talents of coined silver."⁴⁴

And this barbarian opulence is in fact a general excess that affects all areas. The forest of the district of Bazaira (Curt. VIII, 1, 11 ff., esp. 11–13), a place for Persian royal hunts, gives rise to the following comment:

"Barbarae opulentiae in illis locis haud ulla sunt maiora indicia quam magnis nemoribus saltibusque nobilium ferarum greges clusi" ("There are no greater indications of the wealth of the barbarians in those regions than their herds of noble wild beasts, confined in great woods and parks": VIII 1.11).

42 E.g. Y. A. DAUGE, *Le Barbare: Recherches sur la conception romaine de la barbarie et de la civilisation*, Brussels 1981; M. DUBUISSON, "Barbares et barbarie dans le monde gréco-romain: du concept au slogan", *AC* 70 (2001), 1–8; M. DUBUISSON, "La vision romaine de l'étranger. Stéréotypes, idéologies et mentalités", [online], accessed on February 2, 2014, URL: <http://www.class.ulg.ac.be/ressources/vision.pdf>; E. NDIAYE, "L'étranger 'barbare' à Rome. Essai d'analyse sémique", *AC* 74 (2005), 119–135; M. DUBUISSON, "Rhétorique de la propagande à Rome: trois exemples d'usage politique du lexique", *Les Cahiers de Psychologie politique* [online] 12 (2008), accessed on February 2, 2014,

URL: <http://odel.irevues.inist.fr/cahierspsychologiepolitique/index.php?id=630>; E. NDIAYE, "Alexandre, Rome et les barbares d'Orient: rhétorique et politique dans l'*Histoire d'Alexandre* de Quinte-Curce (Livres VIII–X)", *VL* 181 (2009), 45–56.

43 On ethnic identity as relational, see, for a pre-Roman Italian context, S. BOURDIN, *Les peuples de l'Italie préromaine. Identités, territoires et relations inter-ethniques en Italie centrale et septentrionale (VIII^e–I^{er} s. av. J.-C.)*, Rome 2012; more generally, F. BARTH, *Ethnic Groups and Boundaries: The Social Organization of Culture Difference*, Oslo 1969; P. POUTIGNAT and J. STREIFF-FENART, *Théories de l'ethnicité*, Paris 1995. On the "racial" issue in Rome, see also A. N. SHERWIN-WHITE, *Racial Prejudice in Imperial Rome*, Cambridge 1967; B. ISAAC, *The Invention of Racism in Classical Antiquity*, Princeton 2004 (esp. Chapter 5. "Roman Imperialism and the Conquest of the East", 304–323).

44 Curt. X 1.24.

The digression on this “incredible” India is typical of the moralizing perspective of barbarian opulence, denouncing in fact *luxuria* and *uitia* (*Regum tamen luxuria, quam ipsi magnificentiam appellant, super omnium gentium uitia*: “Nevertheless the luxury of their kings, which they themselves call magnificence, surpasses the vices of all other nations”, Curt. VIII 9.23; cf. 31), and *perditi mores* (*ne quid perditis moribus desit, lecticis aureis pelicum longus ordo sequitur*: “that nothing may be lacking in his abandoned habits, a long line of concubines follows in golden litters”, Curt. VIII 9.29).

And of course, this barbarian opulence is contrasted with Macedonian – Roman – virtues, as the description of the Persian army clearly shows (III 3.8–25): the opulence and vanity of the Persian court and army are opposed to the rugged qualities of Alexander’s army.⁴⁵ At §13, Curtius thus mentions “the splendor of barbaric wealth” (*cultus opulentiae barbarae*); at §14, effeminacy, a commonplace of Roman political vituperation, as influenced by the rhetorical schools, is insinuated (*Haec uero turba, muliebriter propemodum culta, luxu magis quam decoris armis conspicua erat*: “This throng indeed, with its almost feminine elegance, was conspicuous rather for luxury than for elegant arms.”),⁴⁶ and at §§17–18 he writes: “The attire of the king was noteworthy beyond all else in luxury” (*Cultus regis inter omnia luxuria notabatur*), then uses *pallam* to emphasize the effeminacy of Darius’ attire,⁴⁷ and describes “a golden belt, with which he [Darius] was girt woman-fashion” (*zona aurea muliebriter cinctus*). The use of *cultus* is significant of the radical opposition between Macedonian-Roman and barbarian *mores*.⁴⁸ The Persian army is then contrasted with the Macedonian army:

“Contra si quis aciem Macedonum intueretur, dispar facies erat, equis uirisque non auro, non discolori ueste, sed ferro atque aere fulgentibus; agmen et stare paratum et sequi, nec turba nec sarcinis praegraue, intentum ad ducis non signum modo, sed etiam nutum.”

“If on the other hand anyone should look upon the Macedonians’ army, its appearance was different; men and horses gleaming, not with gold and parti-coloured garments, but with steel and bronze; an army prepared to stand or to follow, not overweighted with excessive numbers or with baggage, watchful, not only for the signal, but even for the nod of its leader.”⁴⁹

To sum up, the armies one finds in the East are parade armies with no real efficiency, when compared with the Macedonian army.⁵⁰ This, Alexander seems to understand at first, and for a while: he has the army’s baggage destroyed in Babylon, with the support of his sol-

45 Cf. Charidemus to Darius (Curt. III 2.10), and Bolon on Philotas (VI 11.3: *femina*), with, on these three passages, ATKINSON, *Commentary* (n. 15), 108–109; 120–121; J.C. ATKINSON *A Commentary on Q. Curtius Rufus Historiae Alexandri Magni, Books 5 to 7,2*, Amsterdam 1994, 238. Compare the Indian army (VIII 5.3–4).

46 ATKINSON, *Commentary* (n. 15), 125–126; BAYNHAM, *Alexander* (n. 1), 25.

47 Cf. Curt. III 3.13, and ATKINSON, *Commentary* (n. 15), 124, 128.

48 E.g. Curt. V 1.23.

49 Curt. III 3.26–27. This antithetic description repeats more or less the one made by Charidemus (Curt. III 2.11–16, with ATKINSON, *Commentary* (n. 15), 120–121).

50 Same idea again at V 11.20.

diers (VI 6.17). But very soon he gives in to the siren calls for the Orient.⁵¹ Moreover, Curtius sees in barbarian opulence the source of a generalized moral degeneracy. His moral description of Babylon, which he hardly dares to write, could compare with the image of Babylon, Sodom, and Gomorrah in the Bible, and its interpretations in early Christian literature.⁵²

This moral condemnation of luxury, and especially of oriental luxury, is made in the context of the development of Roman commerce with and exploration of the Orient, and its social effects: importing of oriental goods also means oriental luxury and an orientalizing “way of life”. A condemnation of the latter often results in a condemnation of the former: economy and morals are indeed linked. On this matter, Curtius is in the same vein as Cato defending the sumptuary *Lex Oppia*, or Pliny the Elder,⁵³ and probably also influenced by Cynics and Stoics.⁵⁴ Furthermore, effeminacy, oriental luxury and Orient are inseparable of the idea of monarchy and tyranny.⁵⁵ In this respect, Babylon symbolizes the reversal described in book VI.⁵⁶

51 Compare with Alexander's attitude in India (VIII 5.3–4).

52 Curt. V 1.36–39. See also the *perditi mores* of the Indian kings (VIII 9.23, 29).

53 Curt. VIII 9.19. For Pliny: e.g. Plin. *Nat.* VI 101, 162; XXXVII 12–15, 23, 85, 87–88. Commerce with, and exploration of Arabia, India and China are intensified under Claudius (Str. XVII 1.12–13, 44–45; Plin. *Nat.* VI 127–128; cf. XXXVII 85, with H. BARDON, “La valeur littéraire de Quinte-Curce”, *LEC* 15 (1947), 193–220, esp. 197–198), boosted and protected under Nero (M.P. CHARLESWORTH, *Trade-Routes and Commerce of the Roman Empire*, Cambridge 1924, 107), and flourishes under the Flavians. This may be significant for Curtius' date: on might see in Curt. VIII 9.19 a criticism of Titus' orientalizing policy (BARZANÒ, *Curzio* (n. 1), 127 ff.). For a short overview on Roman trade with the East: C. RIVAUD, *Les relations entre le monde indien et l'Empire romain: Romaka: Une introduction*, Paris 1999. For more in-depth analysis, CHARLESWORTH, *Trade-Routes* (n. 53); J.J. MILLER, *The Spice Trade of the Roman Empire 29 B.C. to A.D. 641*, Oxford 1969; M.G. RASCHKE, “New Studies in Roman Commerce with the East”, *ANRW* II 9.2 (1978), 604–1378; J.-N. ROBERT, *De Rome à la Chine: Sur les routes de la Soie au temps des Césars*, Paris 1993; G.K. YOUNG, *Rome's Eastern Trade: International Commerce and Imperial Policy, 31 BC–AD 305*, London/New York 2001; R. MCLAUGHLIN, *Rome and the Distant East: Trade Routes to the Ancient Lands of Arabia, India and China*, London/New York 2010. On Roman exploration, e.g. NICOLET, *L'inventaire* (n. 41), esp. Chapter 4: “Les explorations et les voyages sous l'Empire romain”, 97–101.

54 CUTTICA, *Sententiae* (n. 36), 104.

55 M.P. CHARLESWORTH, “The Fear of the Orient in the Roman Empire”, *CHJ* 2.1 (1926), 9–16; N. PURCELL, “Rome and its Development under Augustus and his Successors”, *The Cambridge Ancient History*², X, Cambridge 1996, 782–811, esp. 791 ff.; A. ALFÖLDI, *Die monarchische Repräsentation im römischen Kaiserreiche*, Chapter 2: “Der Perserkönig als Vorbild des Tyrannen in der griechisch-römischen Literatur”, Darmstadt 1970, 9–19 [= *MDAI(R)*, 49 (1934), 9–19]. Hermolaus' harsh criticism of Alexander's *regnum* (Curt. VIII 7) is closely linked to the Indian context, its luxury and its effect on the Macedonian king (cf. VIII 5.1, 3–6). On the image of Roman tyrants as *molles*, degenerated and effeminate, see F. DUPONT and T. ELOI, *L'érotisme masculin dans la Rome antique*, Paris 2001, esp. part 5: “Libidines et crudelitas, amours de tyran”, 263–323. On *mollitia*, see C. EDWARDS, *The Politics of Immorality in Ancient Rome*, Cambridge 1993, esp. Chapter 2: “Mollitia: Reading the body”, 63–97; C.A. WILLIAMS, *Roman Homosexuality: Ideologies of Masculinity in Classical Antiquity*, New York/Oxford 1999, esp. Chapter 4: “Effeminacy and Masculinity”, 125–159.

56 Curt. VI 6.10; cf. SPENCER, “Perspective” (n. 28), 137.

2.2 *A paradoxical inversion of standards and values*

This antithesis, indeed, may seem immutable but, precisely, the most striking effect of the Orient is that it changes individuals: Curtius stresses Alexander's orientalization at large. And as a secondary effect, while Alexander is orientalizing, some Barbarians may paradoxically appear as "civilized" – and this (the wise Barbarian) is another *topos*. More than the constituent of an antithesis, the East must then be seen as the main factor of an inversion process mainly exemplified by Alexander's orientalization: while conquering the East, Alexander is becoming an Oriental tyrant.

2.2.1 *Alexander's orientalization*

The moralizing description of India, for instance, echoes Alexander's orientalization.⁵⁷ Moreover, Alexander is fascinated, obsessed and blinded by India and its luxury, even willing to compete, in this respect, with Indian armies.⁵⁸ Although Alexander is proud of his army's new luxury, his men have a completely different view.⁵⁹ This orientalization is most clearly highlighted by Curtius in two moralizing statements in book VI, the first one at the beginning (VI 2.1–4), and the second as a conclusion to the Thalestris episode:

“Hic uero palam cupiditates suas soluit continentiamque et moderationem, in altissima quaque fortuna eminentia bona, in superbiam ac lasciuam uertit. Patrios mores disciplinamque Macedonum regum salubriter temperatam et ciuilem habitum uelut leuiora magnitudine sua ducens, Persicae regiae par deorum potentiae fastigium aemulabatur; iacere humi uenerabundos ipsum paulatimque seruilibus ministeriis tot uictores gentium imbuiere et captiuus pares facere expetebat. [...] Haec luxu et peregrinis infecta moribus ueteres Philippi milites, rudis natio ad uoluptates, palam auersabantur, totisque castris unus omnium sensus ac sermo erat, plus amissum uictoria quam bello esse quaesitum; cum maxime uinci ipsos deditos⁶⁰ alienis moribus et externis. Quo tandem ore domos quasi in captiuo habitu reuersuros? Pudere iam sui regem; uictis quam uictoribus similiorem, ex Macedoniae imperatore Darei satrapen factum.”

“It was in fact at this time that Alexander gave loose rein to his passions, and changed continence and self-control, eminent virtues in every exalted fortune, to haughtiness and wantonness. Regarding his native customs and the discipline of the Macedonian kings, wholesomely restrained and democratic, as too low for his grandeur, he strove to rival the loftiness of the Persian court, equal to the power of the gods; he demanded that the victors over so many nations in paying their respects to him should prostrate themselves upon the ground, and gradually sought to accustom them to servile duties and to treat them like captives. [...] These practices, corrupted by luxury and foreign customs, were openly detested by the veteran soldiers of Philip, a people novices in voluptuousness, and in the whole camp the feeling and the talk of all was the same, namely, that more had been lost by victory than had

57 Curt. VIII 9.30 (*regem mero somnoque sopitum*) echoes 6.22 (*sopitum mero ac somno... regem*).

58 Curt. VIII 5.3–4.

59 Curt. X 2.23–24.

60 Bardon and Lucarini (n. 16) have *dedique* instead of *deditos*.

been gained by war; that it was then above all that they themselves were conquered men, when they had surrendered themselves to alien and foreign habits. With what face, pray, would they return to their homes, as if in the attire of prisoners? The king was already ashamed of them since, resembling the vanquished rather than the victors, he had changed from a ruler of Macedonia to a satrap of Darius.”⁶¹

The main motif here is that of the vanquished victors. This may remind us of Horatius' words, *Graecia capta ferum uictorem cepit* (Hor. *Ep.* II 1.156), but here in a dramatic and dangerous, as well as ironic way: let's not forget that Alexander is officially ἀνίκητος, which is reflected by his *perpetua fortuna* or *perpetua felicitas*.⁶² This paradoxical motif also appears in the Page conspiracy, when Hermolaus blames Alexander for his orientalization:

“Quae tamen omnia tolerare potuimus, antequam nos barbaris dederes et nouo more uictores sub iugum mitteres. Persarum te uestis et disciplina delectant, patrios mores exosus es. Persarum ergo, non Macedonum regem occidere uoluimus et te transfugam belli iure persequimur.”

“Yet we could have endured all these things until you delivered us to the barbarians and by a novel fashion made the victors pass under the yoke. It is the Persians' garb and habits that delight you; you have come to loathe the customs of your native land. Therefore it was the king of the Persians, not of the Macedonians, that we wished to kill, and by the law of war we justly pursue you as a deserter.”⁶³

Further in book VIII, Alexander tries to answer this accusation by developing the vision of a universal empire based on clemency, moderation and the fusion of races:

“At enim Persae, quos uicimus, in magno honore sunt apud me! Mihi quidem moderationis meae certissimum indicium est, quod ne uictis quidem superbe impero. Veni enim in Asiam, non ut funditus euerterem gentes nec ut dimidiam partem terrarum solitudinem facerem, sed ut illos quos bello subegissem uictoriae meae non paeniteret. [...] Morem tamen eorum in Macedonas transfundo! In multis enim gentibus esse uideo quae non erubescamus imitari; nec aliter tantum imperium apte regi potest, quam ut quaedam et tradamus illis et ab eisdem discamus.”

“But, he says, the Persians, whom we have conquered, are in high honour with me! In my opinion at least, the surest indication of my moderation is that I do not rule even the vanquished tyrannically. For I came into Asia, not in order to overthrow nations and make a desert of a half part of the world, but in order that those whom I had subdued in war might not regret my victory. [...] Yet I am accused of transferring the customs of the vanquished to the Macedonians! True, for I see in many nations things which we should not blush to imitate; and so great an empire cannot

61 Curt. VI 6.1–10.

62 Curt. IV 9.22; 16.22; VI 5.3; X 5.35; cf. IX 9.2.

63 Curt. VIII 7.12. cf. III 11.23; IV 5.7; V 2.10; VI 2.18; 10.23; VIII 4.25; IX 2.23; X 2.26; 3.12; 5.9, 33; etc.

fitly be ruled without contributing some things to the vanquished and learning from them.”⁶⁴

Again, when sedition arises in the army in book X, the king addresses the foreign troops in the same manner (X 3.7–14):

“Omnia eundem ducunt colorem: nec Persis Macedonum morem adumbrare nec Macedonibus Persas imitari indecorum. Eiusdem iuris esse debent, qui sub eodem rege uicturi sunt.”

“All things take on the same color; it is neither unbecoming for the Persians to simulate the manners of the Macedonians, nor for the Macedonians to copy those of the Persians. Those ought to have the same rights who are to live under the same sovereign.”⁶⁵

Nevertheless, in Curtius’ opinion, this is purely rhetorical, and the troops’ attitude shows it has no real effect on them.⁶⁶ However, the issue here is not assimilation *per se*, but the fact that Alexander’s orientalizing – or “barbarization” – is a *reversed* assimilation: instead of an assimilation-romanization of the conquered people, the victors themselves stand paradoxically as the antithesis of civilization. This inversion of standards and values can also be found in Alexander’s attitude to his friends: while he is receiving the barbarian king Porus among his friends (*Amici*), “estimat[ing] fame more frankly in an enemy than in a fellow citizen” (*simplicius tamen famam aestimabat in hoste quam in ciue*: VIII 14.46), says Curtius, he puts to death Callisthenes, taking the first opportunity that arises to satisfy his anger after the *proskynesis* affair (VIII 6.1–2).⁶⁷

2.2.2 *Mos maiorum illustrated by the Barbarians*

Barbarians, however, can also illustrate traditional values typical of Roman *mos maiorum*. Thus Darius’ mother faces fate nobly and splendidly after Darius’s camp is taken by Alexander (Curt. III 12.25) – as opposed to Alexander, who can’t face his good fortune and becomes an oriental tyrant. In book VI, Nabarzanus appears to be a Stoico-Cynic *fortis uir*.⁶⁸ But the most striking example is probably the famous speech of the Scythian envoy, which can be read as an avatar of the wise-Barbarian *topos* (Curt. VII 8.12–30).⁶⁹ Even

64 Curt. VIII 8.10–13.

65 Curt. X 3.14. On the Opis episode, see OLBRYCHT, “Curtius” (n. 2).

66 See also Ptolemy’s speech after the death of Alexander (Curt. X 6.13–14). On Alexander’s seclusion technique, see E.D. CARNEY, “Artifice and Alexander History”, in: A.B. Bosworth and E.J. Baynham (eds.), *Alexander the Great in Fact and Fiction*, Oxford 2000, 263–285, who sees here a *paraclausithyron* motif.

67 The hierarchical relationship between victors and vanquished – which can often be superimposed on the Roman/Barbarian one – is strictly codified and structures Rome’s image and self-representation. This can be seen on Roman coins, with types such as *capta*; *supplicatio/adoratio*; *restitutio*; or *fides*. See, as an example for the Flavian period, J.M. CODY, “Conquerors and Conquered on Flavian Coins”, in: A.J. Boyle and W.J. Dominik (eds.), *Flavian Rome: Culture, Image, Text*, Leiden/Boston 2003, 103–121.

68 Curt. VI 4.13; cf. CUTTICA, *Sententiae* (n. 36), 106.

69 On this episode, see L. BALLESTEROS-PASTOR, “Le Discours du Scythe à Alexandre le Grand (Quinte-Curce 7.8.12–30)”, *RhM* 146 (2003), 23–37. BERGER, “L’Inde” (n. 20), 31–32, tempers this recognition of Indian wisdom by Curtius, which, he says, “dénie aux sages indiens l’extraordinaire supériorité qu’on

Darius is at times a wise king, arguing, in one of his speeches to his troops before an important battle (V 8.6–17), that man can be free even in the face of death, provided that he acts courageously.

These examples of the barbarian *mos maiorum* are often contrasted with Alexander's orientalization-barbarization, and though the contrast is often implicit, it is not always the case: thus the simplicity of the great king Cyrus, buried as if he had been one of the common folk, surprises Alexander (Curt. IX 1.30–32).⁷⁰ And Curtius is the first to acknowledge such barbarian wisdom. Indeed, relating the speech of the Mede Gobares to Bessus, adorned with local proverbs (Curt. VII 4.10 ff.), he concludes: "This I have quoted, in order that whatever wisdom could exist among barbarians might be recorded" (*Quae inserui, ut qualiscumque inter barbaros potuit esse prudentia traderetur*: VII 4.13).⁷¹ Again, stressing Indian excess and vices in the long digression already noticed, the historian though concludes, probably referring to the sect of gymnosophists:

"Quis credit inter haec uitia curam esse sapientiae? Vnum agreste et horridum genus est, quod sapientes uocant" ("Who would believe that amid such vices there would be regard for philosophy? There is one rude and hideous class which they call sages").⁷²

Barbarians, at times, can show *prudentia*, *consilium*, *moderatio*, *fides* or other virtues which are inseparable of the Roman ideal government.⁷³ The fact remains that Curtius' East, as well as Curtius' Barbarians, are Roman: they are a construct of the Roman mind.⁷⁴ But this is no mere rhetoric, unconscious bias, or even lack of method. Curtius' Orient is a true heterotopia, symbolic, fantastic, ideological and political: the "other", the Barbarian is essentially located elsewhere, on a different territory than "mine".⁷⁵ This "mirror of the other" is a tool for a critical reflection and analysis of Roman politics, carefully constructed and provided to the reader.⁷⁶ It seems interesting therefore to characterize briefly this heterotopia.

leur attribuait couramment".

70 On the positive image of Cyrus in the *Historiae*, e.g. Curt. IV 12.8; 14.24; VII 6.20.

71 Curt. VII 4.8–19 for the whole episode. Cf. VII 8.14–16 for other barbarian proverbs.

72 Curt. VIII 9.31.

73 On barbarian *fides*: e.g. Curt. IV 6.5–6 (*mira fides* of the Persians to their kings); IV 6.7 (Betis of Gaza, *eximiae in regem suum fidei*: "a man of exceptional loyalty to his king"; cf. Baynham, *Alexander* (n. 1), 159, who argues for an ironical dimension of the *fides* motif in this episode); VI 5.1 (Artabazus, *Dareo fidissimus*); as opposed to Alexander's *perfidia* (Philotas' trial; the *proskynesis* affair and Callisthenes' trial; etc.). On virtues and Roman politics, e.g. J. HELLEGOUARC'H, *Le Vocabulaire latin des relations et des partis politiques sous la République*, Paris 1972; R.K. BALOT (ed.), *A Companion to Greek and Roman Political Thought*, Malden 2009 (esp. chapters 13, 15–17, and 27).

74 Similar views discussed more thoroughly in SPENCER, "Perspective" (n. 28); BERGER, "L'Inde" (n. 20), 30–33.

75 This is the essential meaning of *barbarus* (NDIAYE, "L'étranger" (n. 42), 134).

76 Nevertheless, the Roman political color of the *Historiae* does not distort the central issues derived from primary sources (OLBRYCHT, "Curtius" (n. 2), 252). Historical "truth", on the contrary, is the very basis of Curtius' analysis, and gives it its legitimacy. Ancient historiography is no modern history: truth and fiction, in fact, are not relevant criteria to assess ancient history, which is essentially a narrative. In this respect, history is not opposed to poetics. Moreover, as C. Wehrli puts it: "La manière dont les historiens anciens ont composé leurs œuvres a autant de signification, plus parfois, que le contenu

3 The East: transgression, delusion, disorder

D. Spencer rightly stresses that the entry in this world of the “other”, of the stranger, and of the strange is gradual. In this respect, Babylon and book V are central, but India is, in some way, a paradigm for the strange and wonderful Orient and marks Alexander’s entry in a world which is totally and essentially alien.⁷⁷ Indeed, Alexander’s conquest is geographically marked by milestones, which operate as symbolic levels in a world that does not meet Roman standards anymore. Curtius’ East is a kind of island disconnected from reality, a marvellous, yet illusory, dangerous vision. The East is more than an inversion of standards and values: it causes transgression, delusion and disorder, and this ambiguous description of the edge of the (known) world is inseparable from the concept of limits. That the East is a place for confusion, can be inferred from Alexander’s own statement, during the sedition of his army: addressing the foreign troops, he claims “that by this sacred alliance [with a daughter of Darius] I might abolish all distinction between vanquished and victor” (*ut hoc sacro foedere omne discrimen uicti et uictoris excluderem*: X 3.12; cf. 3.7–14). The Orient abolishes all the distinctions (*discrimen*) by which the world is structured and ordered.

3.1 Gender confusion

The abolition of distinctions first affects men and women, as the latter play an unusual (political) role in Alexander’s campaign: thus Thais, a drunken harlot, pushes Alexander to burn down Persepolis, the capital, as well as the religious and political heart of the Persian empire (V 7.1–11).⁷⁸ Later on, Thalestris succeeds in getting a child from the king (VI 5.24–32), a child who is potentially a heir for the empire. And finally, Alexander marries the Persian princess Roxane, a captive, who gives him a son and heir – something harshly criticized by Ptolemy after Alexander’s death (VIII 4.21–30; X 6.13–14).

This gender confusion is also manifested in the very existence, and the political role of eunuchs, “who,” to use Orsines’ words, are “males who made females of themselves by prostitution” (*nec moris esse Persis mares ducere, qui stupro effeminentur*: X 1.26), and who, says Curtius, “are not at all despised by those peoples” (*haud sane illis gentibus uilis*: III 3.23). Among them the powerful Bagoas, described by Curtius as “a eunuch who had won the regard of Alexander through prostitution” (*qui Alexandrum obsequio corporis deuinxerat sibi*: X 1.25). Effeminacy and eunuchs are both *topoi* when it comes to the Orient in antique sources, but Curtius goes further by making them part of his heterotopia: more than a static contrast of standards, they emphasize a dynamic inversion, which the Orient symbolizes. Clitus, completely drunk, ends his reckless speech in the following manner:

historique. A ne chercher que la vérité historique, on risque d’oublier la valeur historiographique” (C. WEHRLI, “La place de Trogue-Pompée et de Quinte-Curce dans l’historiographie romaine”, *REL* 39 (1961), 65). For a critical approach of ancient history conceived as opposed to literary creation, see B. BOULAY, “Histoire et narrativité. Autour des chapitres 9 et 23 de *La Poétique* d’Aristote”, *Lalies* 26 (2006), 171–187. On history in general as a narrative, rather than a “hard science”, see P. VEYNE, *Comment on écrit l’histoire : Essai d’épistémologie*, Paris 1971; R. ARON, “Comment l’historien écrit l’épistémologie: à propos du livre de Paul Veyne”, *Annales (HSS)* 26 (1971), 1319–1354. Cf. n.2.

77 SPENCER, “Perspective” (n. 28), 132 ff.

78 On this episode and Curtius’ version, see ATKINSON, *Commentary* (n. 45), 120–133.

“Verum est, ut opinor, quod auunculum tuum in Italiam dixisse constat, ipsum [i.e. Philippum] in uiros incidisse, te in feminas.”

“That is true, in my opinion, which your uncle is known to have said in Italy, that he [i.e. Philip] had encountered men, you women.”⁷⁹

Bagoas' close relationship with Alexander is but the outcome of this process of oriental degeneracy.

3.2 *Men, gods and wild beasts*

Moreover, and more essentially, the Orient challenges the very nature of the human being, situated between god and wild beasts. On the one hand, Alexander dreams of immortality and divinization: “forgetful of his human condition” (*humanae sortis oblitus*: IV 7.25), he “not only allowed himself to be called the son of Jupiter, but even ordered it” (*Iouis [...] filium se non solum appellari passus est, sed etiam iussit*: IV 7.30). On the other hand, in his determination to keep going further east, Alexander, far from becoming a god, gets closer and closer to wild beasts. The peoples that surround him, indeed, are nearly wild beasts, as is the race of the Mardi, who lives in caves:

“Vastatis inde agris Persidis uicisque compluribus redactis in potestatem, uentum est in Mardorum gentem bellicosam et multum a ceteris Persis cultu uitae abhorrentem. Specus in montibus fodiunt, in quos seque ac coniuges et liberos condunt, pecorum aut ferarum carne uescuntur. Ne feminis quidem pro Naturae habitu molliora ingenia sunt; comae prominent hirtae, uestis super genua est, funda uinciunt frontem; hoc et ornamentum capitis et telum est.”

“Then, after devastating the fields of Persia and reducing many villages into his power, he came to the race of the Mardi, a warlike people, differing greatly from the rest of the Persians in their manner of life. They dig caves in the mountains, in which they hide themselves with their wives and children, they feed on the flesh of their flocks and of wild animals. Not even the women have gentler dispositions, as is Nature's way; they have overhanging bushy hair, their garments do not reach their knees, they bind their brows with a sling; this is both an ornament of their heads and a weapon.”⁸⁰

Again, although Alexander stigmatizes Persian barbarians, describing them as savage beasts (*ferae bestiae*) by nature (*natura*) that should be caught and caged (*captas et inclusas*), in order to be tamed (*mitigat*),⁸¹ the king ends up being a kind of wild beast: Darius, indeed, in addressing his troops, condemns the Macedonian's “manner of wild beasts” (*ritu ferarum*), seeking only destruction (IV 13.14). Moreover, Alexander himself acknowledges, after the death of Clitus, he will have to live alone like a savage beast:

⁷⁹ Curt. VIII 1.37.

⁸⁰ Curt. V 6.17–18; cf. IX 10.9–10. Compare Tac. *Ger.* 46.3–6.

⁸¹ Curt. VI 3.6–8.

“Ceterum magis eo mouebatur, quod omnium amicorum animos uidebat attonitos; neminem cum ipso sociare sermonem postea ausurum, uiuendum esse in solitudine uelut ferae bestiae terrenti alias timentique.”

“But the king was still more disturbed because he saw that the minds of all his friends were terror-stricken, that no one would dare hereafter to converse with him, but he must live in solitude like a savage beast which now inspires terror in other beasts and at other times is itself in fear of them.”⁸²

Alexander's conquest turns out to be a kind of hybristic *adynaton* that clearly challenges Nature and its laws: while facing difficulties in taking the rock held by Ariamazes, “a desire entered his mind to wear out even Nature's strength” (*cupido deinde incessit animo Naturam quoque fatigandi*: VII 11.4). This *adynaton* that ends up with the king becoming a destructive beast is precisely what the Scythian envoy condemns in his strong speech to the Macedonian king (*Sic quoque concupiscis quae non capis*, “So also you desire what you cannot attain”: VII 8.12).⁸³ Once again, Alexander erases entrenched, structuring hierarchies that keep the world in order.

3.3 *An unlimited space*

Challenging Nature and gods shows Alexander knows no limits in his desire of conquest. This is a consequence of another feature of Curtius' East: it is an unlimited space. This motif, as well as the former one, echoes contemporary issues such as the limits of the *orbis terrarum*, or the concern for expansionism and the dimension of the Roman Empire,⁸⁴ its potential fragility and, as a consequence, external interventions and civil wars: Curtius highlights in his work the collapse of Alexander's Empire and the civil wars that arose at that moment. Infinite expansion of the Empire appears thus to be an unnatural and a vicious circle. This excess echoes the leaders' *hybris* – unless it is the reverse – and *ratio* is here at stake. Again, one might refer to the Scythian envoy's speech: *Primus omnium satietate parasti famem, ut, quo plura haberes, acrius quae non habes cuperes* (“First of all men,

82 Curt. VIII 2.7.

83 We may find here an echo of the *pacator* vs. *uastator* and *latro* motifs in Seneca's *Ben.* I 13.3, already echoed in Alexander's answer to Hermolaüs (Curt. VIII 8.10–13).

84 On Roman *orbis*, see J. VOGT, *Orbis: ausgewählte Schriften zur Geschichte des Altertums*, Freiburg 1960, esp. Chapter 7: “Orbis Romanus. Ein Beitrag zum Sprachgebrauch und zur Vorstellungswelt des römischen Imperialismus”, 151–171; K.A. RAAFLAUB, “Born to Be Wolves? Origins of Roman Imperialism”, in: R.W. Wallace, and E.M. Harris (eds.), *Transitions to Empire: Essays in Greco-Roman History, 360–146 B.C., in honor of E. Badian*, Norman/London 1996, 273–314; P. LAEDERICH, *Les limites de l'empire: Les stratégies de l'empire romain dans l'œuvre de Tacite*, Paris 2001; P.-A. DEPROOST, “Rome. Les enjeux idéologiques d'un mythe urbain dans l'antiquité”, in: P.-A. Deproost and B. Coulie (eds), *L'utopie pour penser et agir en Europe*, Paris 2002, 53–71; P.-A. DEPROOST, “*Hic non finit Roma*. Les paradoxes de la frontière romaine”, in: P.-A. Deproost and B. Coulie (eds), *Frontières. Imaginaires européens*, Paris/Budapest/Turin 2004, 29–50. On Roman imperialism, J. CARCOPINO, *Points de vue sur l'impérialisme romain*, Paris, 1934; E. BADIAN, *Roman imperialism in the late Republic*, Oxford 1968; J.-L. FERRARY, *Philhellénisme et impérialisme: aspects idéologiques de la conquête romaine du monde hellénique, de la seconde guerre de Macédoine à la guerre contre Mithridate*, Rome 1988; B. TISÉ, *Imperialismo romano e imitatio Alexandri: Due studi di storia politica*, Galatina 2002.

you by a surfeit have produced a hunger wherein the more you have, the keener is your desire for what you have not").⁸⁵ Furthermore, this pattern can also be linked to Romans' fear, or fantasy, of edges, especially in the East: edges are often ambiguous and ambivalent. By flirting with the limits of the known world, Alexander questions Roman imperialism and Roman myth of *imperium sine fine*.⁸⁶

3.4 *The disorder of Nature*

However, in Curtius' work, this image of the East is no fantasy: Nature itself reflects, even proves this oriental disorder.⁸⁷ Nature does not act as it would be expected to do, as is clearly shown by the inversion of seasons in India (VIII 9.13), and the "shipwreck on dry land, the sea in the river", when Alexander is about to reach the Ocean (*in sicco naufragia, in amni mare*: IX 9.21). Such details are not just mere rhetorical and exotic remarks: they are most significant of Curtius' representation of the East. Here, too, *mirabilia* recover their original sacred dimension: they are a deviation from day to day life that should not exist, and, therefore, are questioning.⁸⁸ There is indeed a hermeneutics of *mirabilia* and ethno-geography, of this heterotopic Orient, which Alexander fails to read and understand. Curtius' East is questioning the concept of border and limits. Alexander's conquest of the East is in fact an extreme *exemplum*, an extreme case study, which leads to a reflection on limits and world order, on the nature of man and power.

3.5 *How Orient and Fortune confuse everything*

Orient and Fortune – they are inseparable in Curtius – confuse everything and there is no more difference between appearances and reality: the East is but a (dangerous) delusion.

3.5.1 *Outward appearance*

Outward appearance is the first main delusion in the *Historiae*. This is symbolized by the *cultus* motif. I have already mentioned the gap between the Persian army's appearance and its efficiency (Curt. III 2.11–16; 3.8–25). In books III and VI, we see again that appearances do not necessarily reflect reality: twice Alexander's physical appearance is portrayed as disappointing. First, Sisigambis, Darius' mother, takes Hephaestion for Alexander (III 12.15–17); then, Thalestris, queen of the Amazons, is surprised by the king's person, "which did not by any means correspond to the fame of his exploits" (*habitus eius haudquaquam rerum famae parem*: VI 5.29).⁸⁹ D. Spencer states that "As Babylon seems marvellous and beautiful at first, its roots are artifice and its reality corruption."⁹⁰ Alexan-

85 Curt. VII 8.19–20.

86 SPENCER, "Perspective" (n. 28), 138, similarly argues that this myth "has to coexist with the constraints and frontiers that map the realities of Roman experience and practice in the East. This mismatch between layers of imaginary, imaginative and tangible expressions of *imperium* can find, in Alexander, a meeting-place."

87 For instance, the Fountain of the Sun and the *locus amoenus*-like oasis of Siwah, contrasted with the desert that surrounds it (IV 7.10–15, 22).

88 THOMAS, "Mirabilia" (n. 29), 2, 4.

89 Compare the Lacedaemonian king Agis' description in the same book (VI 1.3).

90 SPENCER, "Perspective" (n. 28), 13.

der reflects this illusion: unable to manage his fate, fortune and glory, he has become a *tyrannus rex*.

3.5.2 Acts and behaviour

Orient and Fortune make the use of *ratio* very difficult, and, ultimately, impossible for Alexander. This is clear in various passages of the *Historiae*. But everyone's *ratio* is at some point challenged in the East and things are not what they appear to be: concluding a bacchanal episode, Curtius writes:

“Fortuna, quae rebus famam pretiumque constituit, hoc quoque militiae probum uertit in gloriam. Et praesens aetas et posteritas deinde mirata est per gentes nondum satis domitas incessisspe temulentos, barbaris quod temeritas erat fiduciam esse credentibus.”

“Fortune, who assigns renown and value to actions, turned to glory even this disgrace to an army. Both the age of that time, and afterwards posterity, regarded it as wonderful that they marched drunken through nations not wholly subdued, and that the barbarians took this rash conduct for confidence.”⁹¹

4 Conclusion

Curtius' representation of the East is typical of conservative Romans. However, his use of common *topoi* is creative: built within the framework of Roman contemporary politics, Curtius' image of Alexander and the East appears to symbolize, beyond clichés, a general pattern of transgression and paradoxical inversion of standards and values, which is developed in a series of motifs both rhetorical and ideological. The historian's narrative makes Alexander a case for a political study of power in which the East as well as tyranny is an aberration of Nature that challenges the order of the world. Moreover, Orient, Fortune and tyranny are inseparable. Finally, it is the normative ideal of the *optimus princeps* and the very essence of Roman identity which are at stake in this fantasy of degeneracy.

91 Curt. IX 10.28. As another example, Callisthenes' freedom of speech is immediately suspected of insubordination (*contumacia suspectum*: VIII 6.1) by Alexander, who is unable to withstand criticism.

The Figure of Alexander the Great and Nonnus' Dionysiaca

Christian Thrué Djurslev (Exeter)

The figures of Alexander the Great and Dionysus the God have much in common. They are the sons of Zeus; they are young; they are associated with wine and they are also the conquerors of Asia. Latent analogies between the two are generally believed to have been widespread in the time of Alexander himself or in the immediate aftermath of his conquests, and it is their Indian conquests in particular that are believed to have engendered ancient correlations between the two.¹ The association between Alexander and Dionysus was a commonplace in Hellenistic literature, and in due course it became a literary topos visited fairly frequently by Roman writers such as Seneca and Plutarch.²

Whilst the effects of the early interaction between the myths of the two characters are well-known, the impact of this interaction upon the late-antique tradition is less so. Hence I propose an examination of antiquity's longest surviving poem, the *Dionysiaca* of Nonnus of Panopolis, a poem devoted to the life of Dionysus.³ The examination will focus on those parts of the poem that the coalesce imagery of Alexander and that of Dionysus or that expand and develop the imagery already shared between the two figures.

It must be signalled at the outset that we cannot always know whether the poet consciously intended his Dionysus figure to echo the figure of Alexander or whether he inadvertently recycled established assimilations between the hero and the god that had long been a commonplace. Nonnus' projection of the Dionysus figure can, however, allow us to

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- 1 E.g. at city of Nysa: Thphr. *HP* IV 4.1 (Cf. Plin. *Nat.* XVI 144), Arr. *An.* V 1.1–3.4, Curt. VIII 10.11–18, Just. XII 7.6–8. Cf. G. M. COHEN, *The Hellenistic Settlements in the East from Armenia to Bactria and India*, Berkeley 2012, 318–319. There is an abundance of literature on the similarities of Alexander and Dionysus, but see **in general**: J. SEIBERT, *Alexander der Große*, Darmstadt 1972, 204–206; R. LANE FOX, *Alexander the Great*, London 1973, 333–343; J. LINDSAY, *Leisure and Pleasure in Roman Egypt*, London 1965, 347–358; P. GOUKOWSKY, *Essai sur les origines du mythe d'Alexandre*, I–II, Nancy 1978–1981, II *passim*; B. HARRIES, “The pastoral mode in the *Dionysiaca*”, in: N. Hopkinson (ed.), *Studies in the Dionysiaca of Nonnus*, Cambridge 1994, 64; A.B. BOSWORTH, *Alexander and the East: The Tragedy of Triumph*, Oxford 1996, 98–132; O. AMITAY, *From Alexander to Jesus*, Berkeley 2010, 38–45. **For iconography**, see A. STEWART, *Faces of Power: Alexander's Image and Hellenistic Politics*, Berkeley 1993, 79–80; A. STEWART, “Alexander the Great in Greek and Roman art,” in: J. Roisman (ed.), *Brill's Companion to Alexander the Great*, Leiden 2003, 50–57; A. KÜHNEN, *Die Imitatio Alexandri in der römischen Politik*, Münster 2008, 97–110.
 - 2 The notion of Alexander following in the footsteps of Dionysus was proverbial in Roman rhetoric: see, e.g., Sen. *Ben.* VII 3, Plu. *Mor.* 332a–b. See also U. ORTMANN, “Cicero und Alexander”, in: W. Will (ed.), *Zu Alexander d. Gr.: Festschrift G. Wirth zum 60. Geburtstag am 9.12.86*, Amsterdam 1987–1988, 801–878; R. STONEMAN, “The Latin Alexander”, in: H. Hofmann (ed.), *Latin Fiction: The Latin novel in context*, London 1999, 167–186.
 - 3 Edition F. VIAN et al., *Nonnos de Panopolis. Les Dionysiaques*, I–XVIII, Paris 1976–2006. There is a dated English translation at W.H.D. ROUSE, *Nonnus, Dionysiaca*, I–III, Cambridge/London 1940–1942.

observe some of the results of a mythologizing tradition that was vigorously elaborated by other late-antique minds. Viewed from our distant age, the entwining of the two figures may seem curious, but it is nonetheless a vivid vestige of a broader tradition that once revolved around them.

1 The poem and its poet

The *Dionysiaca* dates to the middle or later part of the fifth century AD.⁴ It is an epic, written in Homeric Greek. As it survives, the poem boasts the same number books as the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey* combined. It is difficult to offer any precise information about its author because we have to rely on internal evidence from the poems attributed to his name.⁵ It is safe to say that he worked in the city of Alexandria and that he was a Hellenised Egyptian. No praise is made of his native country. His monumental work did make him famous in the circles of higher literature, and it had a profound impact on later Byzantine poets.⁶

Nonnus' poem is a complex composition drawing upon much lore from mythographers, especially *The Library* of Pseudo-Apollodorus.⁷ But Nonnus also breathes new life into many of the earliest versions of the Greek myths, for instance the story of the slaying of the great dragon, Typhon.⁸ Tracing the myths employed for the story of the protagonist is a significantly harder task because the myth of Dionysus came in many shapes and sizes: already in the first century BC, Diodorus of Sicily knew three core versions whereas his contemporary Cicero knew five.⁹

2 Alexander, Dionysus and Nonnus' sources

We cannot trace the exact extent to which stories about Dionysus influenced the historical Alexander. After his death, however, several of his successors sought to establish a connection between them, especially the Ptolemies. But from the first successor kings onwards, tales linking the two figures proliferated, for instance the Hellenistic tales of Dionysus' Libyan adventures.¹⁰ They are unmistakably akin to Alexander's visit to Ammon in the Siwah Oasis. The story goes that, Dionysus, in need of water in the midst of the dry desert, follows a ram to the Siwah Oasis at which he founds the temple for his father Zeus Ammon.¹¹

Moreover, writing in the third century BC, the mythographer Dionysius Scytobrachion tells another story: the ram-horned but mortal Dionysus was the son of Ammon, built the oracle in Siwah to honour his father and received everlasting fame and apotheosis. Ration-

4 The dating proposed by Vian, AD 450–470, is accepted by A.H.M. KESSELS, "Review of *Nonnos de Panopolis Les Dionysiaques* by F. Vian and P. Chuvin", *Mnemosyne* 35 (1982), 393.

5 Besides the *Dionysiaca* we also have the *Metabolē* or the *Paraphrase of the Gospel of John*.

6 Vian's introduction is illuminating: VIAN, *Nonnos*, (n. 3), I, Introduction, IX–LXX. A brief overview of the poet's life and work at R. SHORROCK, "Nonnus", in: J.M. Foley (ed.), *A Companion to Ancient Epic*, Oxford 2005, 374–385.

7 For its consistent narrative of Dionysus' life, see Apollod. 3.26–37.

8 For the narrative, see Nonn. *D.* I and II. Cf. D. OGDEN, *Drakōn: Dragon Myth and Serpent Cult in the Greek and Roman Worlds*, Oxford 2013, 69–79.

9 D.S. III 63. Cf. Cic. *N.D.* III 23.

10 Collection of sources at A.D. NOCK, "Notes on the ruler-cult I–IV", *JHS* 48 (1928), 27–30.

11 Alexander follows speaking serpents or ravens to the same place, see Ptolemy I *FGrH* 138 F 8 = Arr. *An.* III 3.5.

alised myths about Dionysus hinting at Alexander occur frequently in Hellenistic literature, and later authors were to inherit a vast and varied corpus of mythic material.¹²

According to Inglebert, Dionysus' eastern conquest was retrojected to map onto figures such as Alexander and the Babylonian queen Semiramis,¹³ and the *locus classicus* for this is undoubtedly the geographer Strabo's discussion of who came to India first, a discussion that also features Cyrus the Great, Semiramis and the Pharaoh Sesonchosis.¹⁴ The many myths confounded Roman authors: the Neronian poet Lucan associated the *Zeugma*, a bridge built over the Euphrates river, with Alexander whereas the geographer Pausanias associated the same bridge with Dionysus.¹⁵

The popularity of the figures makes the reconstruction of Nonnus' sources difficult. In the 'Nonnus' article in Pauly-Wissowa's encyclopaedia, R. Keydell points to several lost works that could lie behind Nonnus' narrative: Theolytus of Methymna's *Bacchica*, Euphron of Chalcis' *Dionysos* and Neoptolemus of Paros' *Dionysias*.¹⁶ I would also like to point out that there is, besides Pseudo-Apollodorus' *Library* mentioned above, at least one identifiable source: the *Bassarica*, a now lost poem by the appropriately named Augustan poet, Dionysius. This poem also features the same invented antagonist, the Indian king Deriades, son of the Indian river god, Hydaspes.

We shall return to this epic tradition of Alexander and Dionysus, but first we turn to the principal object of exposition, the *Dionysiaca*. The comparanda from the Alexander tradition are the bulky mass of stories that were circulating in the centuries before Nonnus wrote: stories that are mainly manifest in the alpha recension of the *Alexander Romance* (hereafter *AR*) but may also derive from other mythologizing traditions. We approach the similarities by first expounding the relevant part of the *Dionysiaca* and then considering its thematic resonances within the context of Alexander myth.

3 Survey of similarities between Dionysus and Alexander in the *Dionysiaca*

3.1 Birth myths

From Zeus let us begin because he plays a central role in the inception of the twice-born Dionysus. Two extant traditions about Dionysus' birth have been accommodated within the poem: that of Dionysus Zagreus who is killed by the Titans and that of Dionysus in Zeus' thigh. The former, narrated in only book six, is briefly treated by Nonnus' standards. The latter receives, however, full treatment in three books. Vital to the myth of the thigh is the seduction of Dionysus' mother, Semele. Eros helps Zeus by shooting her with one of his love arrows. Zeus then sneaks into Semele's bridal chamber under the cover of darkness. During the sexual act Zeus transforms himself into a bull, then a lion, then a panther and a dragon. Afterwards, he boasts of the future fame of the child, proclaiming its invincibility and immortality.¹⁷ Zeus' prophetic statements anticipate his sentiment in a later book,

12 Summary of Dionysius Scytobrachion at D.S. III 66–74. The fragments at J.S. RUSTEN, *Dionysius Scytobrachion*, Opladen 1982, F 8, 9, 10, 12.

13 H. INGLEBERT, *Interpretatio Christiana*, Paris 2001, 465–466.

14 Str. XV 1.6–9 (C687–8).

15 For Alexander, Lucan VIII 237. Cf. Plin. *Nat.* XXXIV 150. For Dionysus, Paus. X 29.4.

16 KEYDELL, "Nonnus" in: *RE* XVII, col. 905. Cf. VIAN, *Nonnos*, (n. 3) I, Introduction, XLI–XLV.

17 Nonn. *D.* VII 319–361.

namely that Dionysus is to become a god and protector of all men but only after his Indian campaign.¹⁸

This story recalls the *AR*'s tale of Nectanebus' affair with Olympias. The Egyptian Pharaoh seduces Olympias successfully whilst Philip is away. Like Zeus, he too performs the sequential transformation into a dragon and also the gods. The most explicit similarity is, however, that he continually gives prophecies to Olympias about the fame and greatness of the child in her womb, using the same epithet invincible, *anikētos*, as Zeus does with Semele.¹⁹ Thus, both Alexander and Dionysus are the children of mortal mothers; they are sired by Zeus in the form of a serpent; the epithets ascribed to them are the same and the sequence in the transformation of Zeus and Nectanebus is similar.

The tradition goes deeper for Alexander's part. Although there are numerous remarks on Alexander being the supposititious offspring of Zeus,²⁰ a remarkable one occurs in the Christian text, *Recognitions of Clement*. In a conversation with St. Peter, Clement discusses the infamous deeds of Zeus, first listing the names of women with whom Zeus had incestuous relations; then he appends a list of the women with whom Zeus committed fruitful adultery.²¹ Surprisingly, Olympias appears on the latter list. No other historical characters are on it. The list is even more striking because of the banality of its tone. By incorporating the Olympias' name so matter-of-factly, the author recognises Alexander as a figure of Greek mythology.

Zeus' seduction of Olympias seems to have been reworked into an actual marriage and wedding ceremony. Olympias new role as Zeus' wife may be found in the magnum opus of Pisander of Laranda (*fl.* under Alexander Severus), the *Heroic Marriages of the Gods*. This now lost epic comprised no less than 60 books making it the longest known poem of antiquity.²² Nonnus seems to subscribe to Pisander's notion of the marriage between god and mortal. During his *ekphrasis* of the quiver of Eros, Nonnus writes that Eros' twelfth arrow is meant to wound Olympias with love for her husband-to-be, i.e. Zeus.²³ This is an important help for our modern minds in trying to understand the linkage between the epic of Nonnus and the epic cycle of Pisander: to Nonnus, Eros' arrow is aimed at making Olympias the last bride of Zeus, and Pisander ended the mythological age with their marriage. This is a thoroughly mythologised version of Alexander from far outside the *AR* tradition.

3.2 Upbringing

Avoiding the wrath of Hera, Dionysus grows up in the joyous company of nymphs²⁴ and enjoys life with his friend, the youth Ampelus. This man is, however, killed by Selene who

18 Nonn. *D. Cf.* XIII 1–34.

19 Ps.-Callisth. I 5, I 7. For Dionysus, see Nonn. *D.* X 373, XI 16, XIV 288, XV 121, XXV 74, XXX 326, XXXII 283, XXXIV 128, XL 280, XLV 234. More on Alexander *anikētos*, see W.W. TARN, *Alexander the Great*, Cambridge 1948, II, 338–343.

20 E.g. Plu. *Alex.* 2–3 referring to Eratosthenes *FGrH* 241 F 28. *Cf.* Eun. 228; Nicol. 21. For the tradition, see e.g. Ov. *lb.* 296; Just. XI 11.2–5; Sil. XIII 767–768; Stat. *Silv.* II 7.93; D.Chr. 1.7, 32.95, 64.19–21; Plu. *Mor.* 339, 342; Ps.-Plu. *Fluv.* 1.4; Max.Tyr. 41.1; Luc. *DMort* 12.1, 12.6.5, 13.1–2.

21 Ps.-Clemens *Recognitions* X 20–21.

22 R. KEYDELL, "Die Dichter mit Namen Peisandros", *Hermes* 70 (1935), 308.

23 Nonn. *D.* VII 110–128.

24 Nonn. *D.* IX 1–110. *Cf.* D.S. III 64.6.

goads a bull to break his back, and Dionysus laments his death *in extenso*.²⁵ Whilst it may be argued that Dionysus' and Ampelus' relationship resonates that of Alexander and Hephaestion,²⁶ and also their early lives at Aristotle's school in the Temple of the Nymphs in Mieza,²⁷ a more direct parallel can be found in the Alexander iconography of the fourth century AD.

In Baalbek there is a famous mosaic featuring a nymph bathing an infantile Alexander. Ross has argued that the scenes are indicative of a popular representation of Alexander's divine birth as recounted by the *AR*,²⁸ and I believe that iconographic representations of this kind could be suggestive of a standardised, heroic imagery pertaining to the rearing of quasi-divine children. Nymphs are the wet-nurses of heroes. This may be inferred from the upbringing of other heroes, such as Achilles, to whom nymphs and Cheiron attend, for instance in the *Argonautica* of Apollonius of Rhodes.²⁹

It is unfortunate that Nonnus does not assign Silenus the satyr as a preceptor and advisor to Dionysus,³⁰ which would have aligned him with Aristotle, Alexander's tutor, and indeed Cheiron. But to Nonnus, Silenus serves other purposes: losing a wine-mixing contest, he dances and drinks to the brink of death. When he finally falls over, he turns into a river.³¹

3.3 Looks and epithets

There is a particularly intriguing link to Alexander in the way in which Nonnus describes Dionysus. One such link is his horns, with a kind of moon-disc in the middle functioning as a helmet.³² Nonnus was extremely fond of the horn motif, and it is diffused across many of the poem's characters and lavishly upon those creatures that are usually known to have horns, such as the satyrs.³³ Nonnus uses a specific epithet, *kerasphoros*, to describe the horned characters,³⁴ and Dionysus is ox-horned.³⁵

As for Alexander, his horns vary in number, shape and size over the course of history. They originate on the coinage of Ptolemy I, and are often contextualised as the ram horns of Ammon. Scholarly consensus is that the curly horns were to signify Alexander's link to Zeus Ammon, i.e. his divine status, although some would contend that the horn motif salutes Argead mythology as well; its exploitation of ram and goat motifs was well-known in

25 Nonn. *D.* XI 253–463.

26 D. OGDEN, *Alexander the Great: Myth, Genesis and Sexuality*, Exeter 2011, 155–167.

27 Plu. *Alex.* 7.4.

28 A seminal handling of the images at D.J.A. ROSS, "Olympias and the serpent: the interpretation of the Baalbek mosaic and the date of the illustrated Pseudo-Callisthenes," *JWI* 26 (1963), 1–21. Cf. OGDEN, *Drakon*, (n. 8), 334–335.

29 A.R. IV 811–813.

30 For Silenus in this role, see e.g. D.S. IV 4.3.

31 The ornamental tale is told in the 19th book. For Silenus in other traditional tales, especially from Macedonia, see OGDEN, *Alexander*, (n. 26) 66–7.

32 Nonn. *D.* XVII 235–342.

33 Nonn. *D.* XIV 67–337 describing the horned host of Dionysus.

34 Several characters have horns, e.g. Io: III 257–283; Selene: IX 25–26, X 216; Apollo: XLV 89 (Nonnus specifies that Apollo has horns, but not of the ox-kind: οὐ βοέοις κεράεσσι κερσφόρος ἐστὶν Ἀπόλλων); Deriades: XIII 6. Silenus: XIV 96.

35 See e.g. Nonn. *D.* XXV 232, XXIX 310, XXXIII 1–3 (βοόκραιρος).

antiquity.³⁶ Alexander's literary tradition can surely accommodate both explanations. Further, several of the Hellenistic kings adopted horn motifs. We know from Plutarch that some even wore helmets with ram or goat horns on them, for instance Pyrrhus, who could not be recognised on the battlefield when he took it off.³⁷

The word *kerasphoros* is significant because it is attested in Alexander's tradition, although it appears only twice.³⁸ But then again, his horns are only mentioned thrice in all of ancient literature, and the earliest mention of them is a fragment of the historian Ephippus in which Alexander dresses up as Ammon.³⁹ Also writing in prose, Lucian applies the same epithet to Dionysus in the *Bacchus*.⁴⁰ This particular word occurs in both of their traditions, but the scarcity of references does allow for a firmer connection between the two.

Horns aside, the rest of their bodies were considered effeminate. It is already emphasised in most Classical literature and iconography that Dionysus is not manly,⁴¹ and Nonnus sees no reason to change that fact nearly a millennium later. In a particularly poignant passage, Dionysus is described by a nymph as, 'delicate-haired, iron-less, feeble, female in form.'⁴² Signs of Alexander's effeminacy begins to appear in the literary tradition established immediately after his death. Ogden has explored the notion of Alexander as a *gynnis*, a womanish man. Ogden contends that this idea stemmed from Alexander's lack of a beard, his melting eyes, twist of the neck and his flowing hair. The orientalising features that Alexander picks up in Asia also contributed to this effect.⁴³

Nonnus also emphasises that Dionysus shines. Being a son of Zeus, Dionysus has a heavenly radiance, and we hear that his face shone.⁴⁴ It happens whenever Dionysus leads the van: friend and foe alike recognise him because of his glow, which is as strong as that of the sun.⁴⁵ This quality is also apparent in Alexander's tradition. This trait of Alexander is naturally inherited from the Zoroastrian association between the Achaemenid kings and the sun.⁴⁶ We know of several items and monuments that project Alexander as Helios,⁴⁷ and so too do a number of texts. In the *AR* no one can stand up to Alexander on the account of his divine aspect,⁴⁸ and later it states that Alexander, with help from Ammon, shone like a star when he fled Darius' court.⁴⁹ Also of interest is the sun throne of Darius that led Demaratus of Corinth to exclaim that the dead Macedonians were robbed of a great pleasure, not being

36 OGDEN, *Alexander*, (n. 26), 57–78.

37 Plu. *Pyrrh.* 11.5.

38 Clem. Al. *Protr.* 4.58.2; Ps.-Callisth. III 34.3 = Armenian *AR* §282 (trans. A.M. WOLOHOJIAN, *The Romance of Alexander the Great by Pseudo-Callisthenes*, New York/London 1969).

39 Ephippus, *FGrH* 126 F 5 = Ath. XII 53.

40 Luc. *Bacch.* 2.

41 E. *Ba.* 99–104; 1017–1019. For a visual, see e.g. *LIMC*, s.v. Dionysos 158a.

42 Nonn. *D.* XVI 172.

43 OGDEN, *Alexander*, (n. 26) 174–184.

44 Nonn. *D.* IX 98–110.

45 Nonn. *D.* XVII 13–14.

46 H.P. L'ORANGE, *Studies in the Iconography of Cosmic Kingship in the Ancient World*, Oslo 1953, 9–28.

47 STEWART, *Faces*, (n. 1.) 142, 179–180, 334.

48 Ps.-Callisth. II 15.10.

49 Ps.-Callisth. II 16.2–5.

able to see Alexander on it.⁵⁰ The idea of a sun throne is also spoken of by Aelian and Polyainos in their description of Alexander's magnificent tent.⁵¹

3.4 *The Indian campaign*

The principal narrative of the *Dionysiaca* is that of Dionysus' Indian war. The fighting begins in book 14 with minor skirmishes at the Orontes river in Syria. The river is named after Deriades' godson Orontes, who is killed by Dionysus in a duel.⁵² Dionysus takes the same route east as Alexander, following the exact same pattern of operation, although he skips Palestine and Egypt, attacking Arabia instead. Scholars have pointed out that the way in which Dionysus follows Alexander is the main instance of literary *synkrisis* between the two because Nonnus' Dionysus follows closely the footsteps of Alexander.⁵³ From book 21 onwards the armies clash at the Hydaspes. This river is the father of the Indian king Deriades, and together they challenge Zeus and Dionysus, only to be crushed in a series of attacks and retaliations. It is very significant that Nonnus has chosen this very river; needless to say this is where Alexander's famous battle with Porus was fought.⁵⁴

The duels of Dionysus and Deriades are elaborate. From books XXVII to XXX, they fight at the Indus, with plenty of minor episodes to interrupt the narrative. Later, Dionysus is maddened by Hera and does not return to the battlefield until book XXXVI. When he returns, Deriades charges him astride an elephant. This duel ends in a draw, and Deriades escapes. The climax is, however, disappointing. Dionysus defeats Deriades effortlessly (in just a 100 lines) and he dispatches him with a single jab from his thyrsus staff. Deriades falls into the river, i.e. his father Hydaspes, and he is mourned by his family in the same way as Hector is in the *Iliad*.⁵⁵ It ends in little excitement. Dionysus fulfils what was already prophesied by Zeus, which gives the reader little sense of closure. But then the hero travels in triumph to Tyre, Beirut, Thebes, Athens and Asia Minor – all important places in his own tradition: Thebes, for instance, is important because of his destruction of Pentheus there as dramatised in Euripides' *Bacchae*.

Their duel reminds us not only of that of Achilles and Hector, but also that of Alexander and Porus. In the *AR* Porus is swiftly slain by a single stroke.⁵⁶ This appears to be part of a much broader tradition as evinced by the satirist Lucian, who says that it was a sudden strike. He also goes on to mock the ridiculous notion that Alexander had been described as someone who could kill an elephant with a single spear-throw.⁵⁷

50 Plu. *Alex.* 37.4.

51 Polyæn. IV 3.24. Cf. Ael. *VH* II 27.

52 Nonn. *D.* XVII 229–289.

53 F. BORNEMANN, "Sulla spedizione di Dionisio in India nel poema di Nonno", *SIFC* 47 (1965), 52–67; E.D. LASKY, "Encomiastic elements in the *Dionysiaca* of Nonnus", *Hermes* 106 (1978), 374; P. CHUVIN, *Mythologie et géographie dionysiaques: recherches sur l'œuvre de Nonnos de Panopolis*, Clermont/Ferrand 1991, 284, n. 2: VIAN, *Nonnos* (n. 3), VI, 12–13; VIAN, *Nonnos* (n. 3), VIII, 79–81 and 123–129.

54 Arr. *An.* V 19.2–3. Cf. Plu. *Alex.* 60.14–15.

55 Hom. *Il.* XXII 405–515.

56 Ps.-Callisth. III 4.

57 Luc. *Hist. Conscr.* 12.

3.5 *Apotheosis*

After the victory Dionysus goes to Tyre and marvels at the city and its temple of Star-clad Hercules. There appears to be an ongoing mythic competition between Dionysus, Hercules and Perseus,⁵⁸ which is strangely reminiscent of Alexander's well-known rivalry with those two gods.⁵⁹ It is significant that Dionysus is Hercules' equal and given a starry robe to establish this. This brings us to the apotheosis of Dionysus, which is the end of the poem. He is allowed into heaven to sit at his father's table.⁶⁰ As for Alexander, scholars tend to disagree about how explicit Alexander's apotheosis was, although we do know of some contemporary flatterers that were said to have called Alexander a god.⁶¹

Theocritus' encomium of Ptolemy II Philadelphus also refers to Alexander as an apotheosized mortal in that he sits in Olympus next to Zeus.⁶² This is, however, modelled on Hercules not Dionysus. It is worth noting that Alexander has the glittering diadem which signifies that he is not an *Indophonos theos*, but the bane of the Persians. Notably there is also a general idea that Alexander joins Hercules and Dionysus as the third apotheosized mortal. This is explicit in a passage from the *AR* in which Alexander prays to Zeus that he may become the third mortal made god.⁶³ When he finally dies, after he has dictated his testament, he too is taken to the sky as a brilliant star accompanied by a great eagle. The Latin translation of the *AR* has a slight variation: it was a fiery serpent that returned Alexander's soul to heaven.⁶⁴

3.6 *Final observations*

Lastly, mention must be made of a few things that might simply be coincidental when we compare such a long poem with Alexander's tradition. Both heroes found cities, for instance Nicaea in Dionysus' case;⁶⁵ they fight well; they travel to places familiar to both characters; the epithet *anikētos* is usually used about them both; and both make female acquaintances. Their female relationships are peculiarly curious: every nymph that Dionysus meets reminds him of his own mother.⁶⁶ The very same motif occurs in the *AR* in the Candace-narrative. When Alexander sees her for the first time, he thinks of his mother because she is wearing a beautiful diadem and looks half-divine.⁶⁷

4 Conclusion: Alexander and Dionysus in Late Antiquity

The survey has outlined some of the principal analogies between the figure of Alexander in his tradition and the Dionysus figure of the *Dionysiaca*. It is clear *a priori* that we should not consider Dionysus an exact calque of Alexander but rather that there are certain features that interlock, creating an intertwining interface of heroic motifs and encomiastic themes.

58 Nonn. *D.* XXV 22–252.

59 Arr. *An.* III 3.1–2.

60 Nonn. *D.* XLVIII 974–978.

61 See e.g. Ath. 250f–251a.

62 TheoC. 17.15–17.

63 Ps.-Callisth. III 30.15–16.

64 Ps.-Callisth. III 33.26 = Armenian *AR* §280. Cf. Val. III 31.

65 Nonn. *D.* XVI 403–405. Cf. Arr. *An.* V 29.5. See Lasky, “Encomiastic” (n. 53), 375.

66 Nonn. *D.* XV–XVI (Nicaia); XLI–XLIII (Beroe); XLVIII 90–240 (Pallene); XLVIII 590–947 (Aura).

67 Ps.-Callisth. III 22.1. On Alexander's mothers, OGDEN, *Alexander* (n. 26), 151–154.

Equally clear is the fact that there was in Late Antiquity an ever-ongoing renewal of Alexander's tradition that we may consider a supplementary mythologisation to that of the *AR*. This included a vigorous revision of the mythological cycles, further incorporating Alexander into them.

Nonnus' poem offers a lens through which it is possible to review some of these trends that evolved across prose and poetry, art and iconography. It is so unfortunate that we do not possess more of the other late-antique poems about Alexander and Dionysus that could enable us to discuss the similarities with more confidence and certainty. Even though the *Dionysiaca* occupies more than 48 books, it remains but the small tip of the iceberg that is the intertwined mythologisation of Alexander and Dionysus.

The Great, Son of the Great. Alexander – Son of Darius?

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The Persian Wars opened a new epoch. But they also closed an old one. Greek culture had been created from the fruitful interchange between east and west; that debt was now forgotten. An iron curtain had descended: east against west, despotism against liberty – the dichotomies created in the Persian Wars echo through world history...

O. Murray, *Early Greece* (1993, 301)

The current paper aims at presenting a series of questions rather than proposing definitive answers. Its main objective is to draw scholarly attention to tentative evidence for the Persian influence on Macedonia before Alexander, therefore the first part is concerned with textual and historical accounts, while the second part presents selected archaeological testimonies that corroborate such notion. I do not intend to argue that oriental influence shaped Macedonia entirely, or even that it had been predominant in the emergence of the state, its institutions and traditions, but that it should not be neglected as one of the crucial elements in the formation of the Macedonia that in the 4th century BC managed to dominate not only the Greek world but also to conquer the greatest empires of the East. I also would like to suggest that possibly what had been seen by historians, ancient and modern, as Alexander's antics, i.e. the adoption of eastern habits, may have been ingrained in the traditions of his own country and culture. That Alexander, named the son or half-brother of Darius (III) in the Persian tradition, was actually the cultural descendant, the "son" of the great Darius (I), even if this heritage had been largely forgotten on the official or conscious level.¹

1 Prolegomena

When talking about Alexander's alleged orientalism² we usually tend to take one of the traditional approaches: either concentrate on the dissent caused by the adoption of Persian habits after the conquest of the Achaemenid empire, or on its pragmatic aspect, or on the

1 Such ideas do appear in scholarship but no work known to me does elaborate on the details of the notion, therefore the present paper aims at bringing together some pieces of evidence and arguments that could be used for further research on the subject.

2 The term as such can have two distinctive meanings in modern scholarship: it can denote either the neutral concept of imitating and adopting Oriental customs, or it can relate to the post-colonial theories and the set of associations that was introduced by Edward Said. In this paper the former meaning is employed.

question of the “unity of mankind”, or, ultimately, on the rejection of the whole notion as of no consequence at all.³ In both cases we focus on the attitude of Alexander towards oriental customs and ideas of rulership in the first place, as if it had been only in Persia that he made contact with them and – speaking in modern terms – put them into fashion. We focus therefore on to what extent Alexander became an Oriental king upon the conquest of the East, and what impact it had on the Macedonians. Ancient sources sometimes put the blame for the collapse of Alexander’s authority on this Oriental turn with the particular emphasis on the *proskynesis*, ignoring the fact that the Hellenistic monarchies that emerged from his conquests drew on the non-Greek traditions without causing general opposition in the ranks of their armies and subjects. On the other hand, some Oriental traditions, including the *Shahnameh*, feel obliged to include Alexander among the Persian kings (sometimes as son of Darius III),⁴ partly in order to preserve the dynastic continuity, but perhaps at least partly because he did style himself after the former rulers, thus enabling such symbolic identification.

We very rarely look into Alexander’s ancestry and the Macedonian background for possible roots of this attitude. Ever since Alexander I (i.e. the second king who is undoubtedly attested in historical sources at the turn of the 6th and 5th centuries BC) Macedonia is notorious for its struggle to emulate the Hellenes and to be included among the Hellenic peoples. The attempts of Alexander I and Archelaos, in the first place, are well known: the decision of the Olympian *agonothetes* to allow the Macedonians to partake in the sports games on the one hand, and the need to establish a rival centre for *agones* in Dion on the other hand, the inflow of Greek artists to the Macedonian court during the reign of Archelaos and Philip II, the possible influence of Theban education on Philip’s reforms of the military and the state. These Hellenic aspirations are discussed in almost every book on Macedonian history, and need not be recalled now in detail. There are, however, elements in Macedonian culture and civilization, in the organisation of the state and the character of the monarchy, that call for other interpretations, but very often – especially as far as the political system is concerned – are explained away as the remnants of early social organisation, based on what we know about the early Hellenic peoples (and the heritage of the Bronze Age) for instance from the Homeric corpus.

The general problem with Macedonia, however, is that we do not possess reliable written sources about its early history:⁵ the kingdom emerged on the political scene for the first time in the roughly contemporary work of Herodotus, and apparently was by then perceived

3 For an overview of the problem see M.-P. DELAYGUE-MASSON, *La Grèce d’Alexandre et son rêve d’Orient. La conquête de l’Empire Perse: un autre mythe, une autre réalité de l’Orient*, Paris 2008, 173–179; for the variety of arguments see e.g. E. FREDRICKSMEYER, “Alexander and the Kingship of Asia”, in: A.B. Bosworth and E.J. Baynham (eds.), *Alexander the Great in Fact and Fiction*, Oxford 2000, 136–166; A.B. BOSWORTH, “Alexander and the Iranians”, in: I. Worthington (ed.), *Alexander the Great: A Reader*, London/New York 2003, 208–235; R. LANE FOX, “Alexander the Great: ‘Last of the Achaemenids?’”, in: C. Tuplin (ed.), *Persian Responses: Political and Cultural Interaction with(in) the Achaemenid Empire*, Swansea 2007, 290–293.

4 M. SOUTHGATE, “Portrait of Alexander in Persian Alexander-Romances of the Islamic Era”, *JAOS* 97.3 (1977), 279–280.

5 P.J. RHODES, “The Literary and Epigraphic Evidence to the Roman Conquest”, in: J. Roisman and I. Worthington (eds.), *A Companion to Ancient Macedonia*, Malden/Oxford 2010, 23–40.

as an established dynastic monarchy, even if with rather imprecisely described role of the king. From later sources we may guess, though, that the “king” (we do not even know what title had been in use in that early historical period, since although the term “basileus” appears in Herodotus’ account, it is not attested in Macedonia itself until the reign of Alexander the Great, and no local testimonies from the period are available)⁶ performed two main roles: that of the political and military leader (*basileus* and *strategos*), as well as a ceremonial one in religious festivals – of the overseer of the rites, not a priest though, and not a divine figure.⁷ These functions coincide with what we believe to have been the roles of the Homeric and Archaic “basileis” and possibly the Mycenaean kings,⁸ but it also resembles the position of the Achaemenid Great King, with the exception of the fact that the Persian king had been a sacral figure.⁹ The simple reason for all these similarities can be of course the common heritage of the Indo-European peoples, but what draws attention is the different evolution of political system not only from the democratic or oligarchic poleis, but also from the remaining monarchical states: Macedonia is not like the Archaic tyrannies of the Greek world. One of the crucial traits of Macedonian kingship and its legitimization was its hereditary character within the royal clan or dynasty; however, even in the times best attested in sources the way of establishing succession seems complex and at times unclear, especially in respect of the role of the assembly, which results in ongoing scholarly disputes on the subject.¹⁰

It is also intriguing that when Macedonia makes its first major appearance in the Greek historical writings, it is presented in the very middle of its unclear relationship with the Persian empire. Herodotus (VIII 137–139) gives us a mythical story of the beginnings of the Argead dynasty, arguing its Hellenic (Peloponnesian, Heraclid) origins, and then jumps

6 The only possible candidate for a Macedonian word denoting the “king” or royal rule, is the hapax *ταρόναγα*, testified by one gloss in Hesychios; see I.K. PROBONAS [I.K. Προμπονάς] “Μακεδονικά και Δημητικά γλωσσικά”, in: *Ancient Macedonia, II: Papers Read at the Second International Symposium held in Thessaloniki, 19–24 August, 1973*, Thessaloniki 1977, 402; W. SOWA, “Die Makedonischen Glossen in antiken Quellen”, *Studia Etymologica Cracoviensia* 11 (2006), 118; cf. O. HOFFMAN, *Die Makedonen, ihre Sprache und ihr Volkstum*, Göttingen 1906, 77 and 114.

7 C. THOMAS, *Alexander the Great in His World*, Malden/Oxford 2007, 141–144. As for the religious aspect, N.G.L. HAMMOND, *The Macedonian State: The Origins, Institutions and History*, Oxford 1989, 22, and in N.G.L. HAMMOND, *The Miracle That Was Macedonia*, London/New York 1991, 31–34, argues that the king was perceived as a semi-divine figure but the proposed main evidence (Hdt. VIII 139) is hardly convincing.

8 See e.g. R. DREWS, *Basileus: The Evidence for Kingship in Geometric Greece*, New Haven 1983, esp. 100–101; P. CARLIER, *La Royauté en Grèce avant Alexandre*, Strasbourg 1984, esp. 117–131. See also for some arguments in favour of the influence of Helladic cultures on the development of Macedonian political system (via the Minoan Bottiaean: S. MARINATOS, “Mycenaean Elements within the Royal Houses of Macedonia”, in: *Ancient Macedonia: Papers Read at the First International Symposium held in Thessaloniki, 26–29 August 1968*, Thessaloniki 1970, 45–52.

9 See e.g. G. WIDENGREN, “La royauté de l’Iran antique”, *Acta Iranica* 1 (1974), 84; P. FILIPPANIRONCONI, “La conception sacrée de la royauté iranienne”, *Acta Iranica* 1 (1974), 90–92; A. KUERT, “Achaemenid images of royalty and empire”, in: G.B. Lafranchi and R. Rollinger (eds.), *Concepts of Kingship in Antiquity: Proceedings of the European Science Foundation Exploratory Workshop, held in Padova, November 28th–December 1st, 2007*, Padova 2010, 99–100.

10 R.M. ERRINGTON, *A History of Macedonia*, Berkeley/Los Angeles/Oxford 1990, 220; HAMMOND, *Miracle* (n. 7), 34–39; J. RZEPKA, *Monarchia macedońska. Zgromadzenie i obywatelstwo u schyłku epoki klasycznej i w okresie hellenistycznym*, Warsaw 2006, 30–34; THOMAS, *Alexander* (n. 7), 57–60.

over a list of kings to his times and the reigns of Amyntas I (540–498) and Alexander I, the two earliest historical kings of Macedonia, and elsewhere presents his reader with an almost allegorical story of how the Macedonians eventually sided with the Hellenes in the struggle against the Persians, and expelled the invaders from their court by means of trickery:

“The Persians who had been sent as envoys came to Amyntas and demanded earth and water for Darius the king. He readily gave to them what they asked and invited them to be his guests ... After dinner, the Persians said to Amyntas as they sat drinking together, “Macedonian, our host, it is our custom in Persia to bring in also the concubines and wedded wives to sit by the men after the giving of any great banquet. We ask you ... to follow our custom.”

To this Amyntas replied:

“We have no such custom, Persians. Among us, men and women sit apart, but since you are our masters and are making this request, it shall be as you desire.” With that, Amyntas sent for the women. ... the women entered and sat down in a row opposite the Persians. Then the Persians ... said that there was no sense in what he had done. It would be better if the women had never come at all than that they should come and not sit beside the men, but sit opposite them to torment their eyes. Amyntas ... bade the women sit beside them ... [and] the Persians, flushed as they were with excess of wine, at once laid hands on the women’s breasts, and one or another tried to kiss them. This Amyntas saw, but held his peace despite his anger because he greatly feared the Persians. Amyntas’ son Alexander, however ... could not bear it longer and said to Amyntas in great wrath, “... Leave us and take your rest ... I will stay here and give our guests all that is needful.” ... When Amyntas ... had gone his way, Alexander said to the Persians, “Sirs, you have full freedom to deal with these women, and may have intercourse with all or any of them. As to that, you may make your own decision, but now, since the hour of your rest is drawing near and I see that you are all completely drunk, allow these women to depart and wash, if this is your desire. When they have washed, wait for them to come to you again.” ... Alexander then took as many beardless men as there were women, dressed them in the women’s clothes, and gave them daggers ... These he brought in ... seated each of his Macedonians next to a Persian, as though they were women, and when the Persians began to lay hands on them, they were killed by the Macedonians. ... No long time afterwards the Persians made a great search for these men, but Alexander had cunning enough to put an end to it by the gift of a great sum and his own sister Gygaea to Bubares, a Persian and the general of those who were looking for the slain men. It was in this way, then, that the death of these Persians was kept silent.” Hdt. V 18–21, transl. by A.D. Godley

Setting aside the question of the historicity of this account, as well as its affinity with the transvestitism of the passage rites,¹¹ what draws our attention in the context of the present

11 For an overview of the question see J.N. BREMMER, “Transvestite Dionysos”, in: M.W. Padilla (ed.), *Rites of Passage in Ancient Greece: Literature, Religion, Society*, Lewisburg 1999, 188–193. For Macedonia cf. the myth of Dionysos Pseudanor (recorded by Polyaeus IV 1, allegedly after Callimachus’

discussion, is that after a very detailed account of the treacheries and vendettas, somehow *en passant* Herodotus informs us that in the course of the peace negotiations one of the daughters of Amyntas, named Gygaea (a clearly Phrygian name, which may add to the legendary character of the story)¹² married the Persian aristocrat Bubares, and moved with him to Persia, where their offspring continued to flourish, which somehow is contradictory to the main account of the enmity sowed between Macedonians and Persians by the outrageous behaviour of the Persian envoys. Noteworthy the historical Amyntas was a Persian ally to the extent that it was him who received Hippias, after he had been exiled from Athens upon the fall of Peisistratid tyranny, while the common knowledge would simply say that the surviving son would go to Persia.

We will not be dwelling on the passage in question, especially that a lot of ink was spilled over it (we will return to it, nonetheless), but what requires to be emphasized is that Herodotus leaves out one important set of information concerning the years of peaceful coexistence of the Persians and the Macedonians before Alexander I, and also the role of the latter in the attempts at forging a peace between Athens and the Persian King during the Persian wars, as well as the stationing of Mardonios' army in the Thraco-Macedonian lands.¹³ The choice of subject matter makes the impression that around the time described by Herodotus, due to some political calculations the Macedonian kings decided to side with the Hellenes instead of the Persians, and that Herodotus was promoting this version of the Macedonian history, in which the pro-Persian episode is diminished and almost forgotten. The simplest reason for this stance would be that the pro-Hellenic attitude fitted Herodotus' account better, and if indeed he had been guest at the Macedonian court, he may have felt obliged to promote the new political course of his patron. And since from before and after Herodotus (until the scarce fragments from the 4th century BC and the Roman sources) we have very little information about early Macedonian history, his perspective looms over our perception of the kingdom that would eventually produce the conqueror of Persia. We therefore tend to diminish or even forget the presence of the Persians in Macedonia in the last decades of the 6th century BC, and the fact that the Thraco-Macedonian area was actu-

Aetia, which allows for the possibility that the myth is a Hellenistic fabrication); the in-depth discussion on his cult and its analogies is presented in M.B. HATZOPOULOS, *Cultes et rites de passage en Macédoine*, Athens 1994, 73–85.

12 The question of possible influences of the early Phrygian culture on Macedonia obviously falls beyond the scope of this paper, but it is worth mentioning that Herodotus (VII 73) speaks of a “synoecism” of Phrygians and (proto-)Macedonians, who had settled in the “gardens of Midas”. Archaeological research has confirmed the migration of the Lausitz culture bearing Briges in the Bronze Age, and their settling in the region of historical Macedonia ca. 1200 BC; the Briges moved later to Asia Minor where they founded the Phrygian state and believed themselves to be autochthonous (the migration and the change of the name is again recorded by Herodotus (VII 73), and elaborated on by Konon (*FGrH* 26 F1), see also Str. VII 25); see N.G.L. HAMMOND, *A History of Macedonia*, I: *Historical Geography and Prehistory*, Oxford 1972, 407–414. In this light the importance given by Alexander to the sacred wagon and its knot at Gordium acquires additional meaning, again, however, beyond the scope of this paper, but see interesting approaches to the general subject in E.A. FREDRICKSMEYER, “Alexander, Midas, and the Oracle at Gordium”, *CPh* 56 (1961), 160–168; L.E. ROLLER, “Midas and the Gordian Knot”, *ClAnt* 3 (1984), 256–271.

13 S. CASSON, *Macedonia, Thrace, Illyria: Their Relations to Greece from the Earliest Times Down to the Time of Philip son of Amyntas*, Oxford 1926, 180.

ally for a short time the westernmost satrapy, or at least dependency of the Achaemenid empire, usually identified with the Skudra from the royal inscriptions of Darius I, e.g. on the base of the Egyptian statue from Susa and on his tomb in Naqsh-e Rostam, but missing from the inscription at Behistun.¹⁴

Since this fact is, fortunately, attested by some textual, mostly epigraphic evidence, historians can to some extent reconstruct the political situation of that time, but the crucial question that is rarely asked is: what was the cultural impact of that period on the formation of the Macedonian state, kingship and customs? Xenophon (*Cyr.* VIII 6.10, translated by W. Miller) informs us that Cyrus the Great “gave orders to all the satraps he sent out to imitate him in everything that they saw him do”, but does this, probably emphatic expression apply to the appointed royal satraps only, or also to those local dynasts who had been left in power in the conquered or subjugated provinces, or the “adjoined lands/peoples”, as Maria Brosius names them?¹⁵ We will be returning to this question later.

Some of the aspects can be only tentatively pointed out now, since their analysis would require a historian’s expertise on both Persian and Greek political and social systems,¹⁶ but I would like to draw attention to a small number of the state affairs and social organization that seem to call for Persian influence, as they are otherwise unknown or rare in the Greek world: the preservation of monarchy, the system of “royal” roads and the position of women in society, as well as the preference for unmixed wine.¹⁷ This trait, as we know, was

14 CASSON, *Macedonia* (n. 13), 179 is convinced about the satrapal status of the province, but more recent scholarship is less certain about how exactly the Persian rule or domination was exercised in various areas of Thraco-Macedonia; see J.M. BALCER, “Persian Occupied Thrace (Skudra)”, *Historia* 37 (1988), 1–21; E. REHM, “The Impact of the Achaemenids on Thrace: A Historical Review”, in: J. Nieling and E. Rehm (eds.), *Achaemenid Impact in the Black Sea: Communication of Powers*, Aarhus 2010, 147–152. Another radical view is proposed by G.D. BACHEVA, “Detecting a Satrapy: The Skudra Case”, *Thracia* 20 (2012), 11–12, who suggests that the Skudra is named in the “lists of peoples” and does not need to be the name of a province, and also that possibly there had been no Persian administration in the area. This historical problem, hardly solvable in the light of available textual material, is of minor importance for the present paper, for which the very presence of Persians in the area, regardless of its formal status, is crucial. Obviously, any definitive conclusions concerning the political status of Macedonia could add to the hypotheses presented, but they would not change the general image. The present author is in favour of the “adjoined land” (see note 15) or dependency with local administration version; the presence of the family of Megabazos and Bubares in Macedonia until ca. 470 BC (*Hdt.* VII 22) seems to corroborate this. Interesting, however, is the suggestion by A. FOL and N.G.L. HAMMOND, “Persia in Europe, apart from Greece”, in: J. Boardman et al., (eds.), *The Cambridge Ancient History*, IV²: *Persia, Greece and the Western Mediterranean c. 525 to 479 B.C.*, Cambridge 1988, 246–247, that the Skudra can be a Phrygian name for the region.

15 M. BROSIUS, “Pax Persica and the Peoples of the Black Sea Region”, in: J. Nieling and E. Rehm (eds.), *Achaemenid Impact in the Black Sea: Communication of Powers*, Aarhus 2010, 34.

16 Some aspects omitted here, mostly political and economic, are discussed in THOMAS, *Alexander* (n. 7), 173–186, who, however, ignores most of the aspects put forward here; see also M.J. OLBRYCHT, “Macedonia and Persia”, in: J. Roisman and I. Worthington (eds.) *A Companion to Ancient Macedonia*, Malden/Oxford 2010, 367.

17 For Macedonia: D.S. XVI 87.1; *Ath.* XII 53; E.N. BORZA, “The Symposium at Alexander’s Court”, in: *Ancient Macedonia*, III, Thessaloniki 1983, 47–49. For Iranian customs and Persia: according to *Ath.* X 29 unmixed wine could also be called “Scythian drinking”, which points at another Iranian people who adhered to this custom. Elsewhere *Athenaios* (X 39), after Plato (*Lg.* I 637d–e; the quotation does not conform exactly with the established text), enumerates the peoples who practice heavy drinking:

commonly associated with the Macedonians in the discussions over their alleged Hellenism vs. barbarism.

The following table compiles the most important traits that can be taken into consideration in this context. Some of them have political dimension, as they pertain to the government system, some reflect social system, and some every-day and burial customs, i.e. they cover the most important areas of the life and functioning of the state.

	Greeks ^I	Persia	Thrace	Macedonia
Dynastic monarchy	-	+	+	+
Centralized power	-	+	+/-	+
“Imperial” system of state roads	-	+	-	+
High position of women ^{II}	-	+	+	+
Unmixed wine	-	+	+	+
Monumental tombs	-	+	+	+
Banquet style burials	-	+ (?) ^{III}	+	+
Persian style grave goods	-	? (+) ^{IV}	+	+
^I “Average” of Greek customs in the poleis of the Greek mainland (with the exception of Sparta and Thessaly) and in the colonies following traditions of their metropoleis in the 5th-4th century BC. ^{II} Women are not excluded from public life, can own estates and amass wealth, are allowed to run their own businesses;¹⁸ paradoxically this is more important in case of high-born women, since middle class and poor women were able to achieve slightly higher degree of independence in societies that adhered to very strict rules otherwise, e.g. in Athens. ^{III} Preserved interiors of tombs allow us to assume that burials may have had this aspect but there is no conclusive evidence for it. Satrapal tombs in Lydia possess this character. ^{IV} All Persian aristocratic tombs had been robbed, so there is no material preserved, but common sense dictates that such would be the case. However, “Persianized” burials e.g. in Daskyleion contain artefacts characteristic for Achaemenid art.¹⁹				

the Scythians and Thracians as named those who drink only unmixed wine, while the list contains also the Lydians, Persians, Carthaginians, Celts and Iberians; the Persian way of drinking is called the most elegant of these. Further information on the Persian kings and drinking habits in Persia can be found in Ath. X 45.

18 Detailed analysis of economic position of women in Achaemenid Persia is given by M. BROSIUS, *Women in Ancient Persia (559–331 B.C.)*, Oxford 1996, 123–182. Outlines of the situation in Macedonia in this respect, with the emphasis on the role of the aristocratic women, can be found in HAMMOND, *Macedonian* (n. 7), 31–36; E.D. CARNEY, *Women and Monarchy in Macedonia*, Norman 2000, esp. 3–4, 8–18, 29–30. Cf. E.D. CARNEY, “Foreign Influence and the Changing Role of Royal Macedonian Women”, *Ancient Macedonia. V: Papers Read at the Fifth International Symposium held in Thessaloniki, October 10–15, 1989*, Thessaloniki 1993, 318: “It is quite possible that the role of royal women in the Persian monarchy affected the role of royal women in the Macedonian.”

19 For notes III and IV in the table see M. MELLINK, “Anatolia”, in: J. Boardman et al., (eds.), *The Cam-*

This list clearly shows that as far as social organization and basic customs are concerned, both Thrace and Macedonia were much closer to what we find in Achaemenid Persia than to the Hellenic poleis. Apparently, however, most of these traits – with the exception of monarchy and unmixed wine – had not been of consequence for both sides when discussing the alleged Hellenicity of the Macedonians, since apart from the two aforementioned notions none really occupied the minds of the ancient authors.

2 Material presence

In the remaining part of this paper I would like to concentrate on customs and their reflection in archaeological material, which leaves less space for speculations, even if it provokes long-lasting disputes over its interpretation. This evidence includes in the first place the burials, which provide us with information both on the beliefs concerning the afterlife (which will not be discussed here) and on the character of goods produced or imported. Even though most of the material as well as iconographic evidence for the Persian influence comes from burial contexts, we may assume that these goods reflect the fashions present also in the every-day life. In addition to the presentation of such objects some architectural features of the burials, which are subject of ongoing controversies, will also be discussed.

To understand better the ethnic and cultural (in the archaeological meaning of this word) situation in the area occupied later by the kingdom of Macedonia we should go back to the literally “proto-historic” times, i.e. to the issue of the Thraco-Macedonian tribes and the cultural community of the peoples populating the area that is now north-eastern Greece and reaches to south-eastern Bulgaria. Much as there is no reason to identify these two peoples on the ethnic grounds (the Thracians moved to their historical terrains between the Black Sea and the Aegean Sea upon the arrival of Doric population to Pieria), the Archaic period seems to see some kind of cultural unification of the tribes, who would later evolve into two separate political entities and subsequently develop cultural differences with surprising amount of similarities, however: Thrace and Macedonia.²⁰ They shared similar political system, based on monarchic rule (attested on Thracian coins earlier than in Macedonia proper) but also on the relative economic and political independence of the cities and tribes (again the main evidence is given by coins).²¹

From the 6th century BC the kingdom of Macedonia had been rising to power in the area, thanks to its political and military expansion on the one hand, and the unification of several so far separately ruled regions (which would probably bear consequences as late as the 4th century BC, if we consider the very attractive version of the assassination of Philip II

bridge *Ancient History*, IV²: *Persia, Greece and the Western Mediterranean c. 525 to 479 B.C.*, Cambridge 1988, 221–223. Arrian (VI 29) gives some idea about the grave good of Cyrus the Great.

20 For various aspects of this cultural unity or at least affinity see e.g.: CASSON, *Macedonia* (n. 13), 176; J. BOUZEK, “Macedonia and Thrace in the Early Iron Age”, in: *Ancient Macedonia, IV: Papers Read at the Fourth International Symposium held in Thessaloniki, September 21–25, 1983*, Thessaloniki 1986, 125–126; D. GERGOVA, “Common Elements in the Ritual Behaviour of Thracians and Macedonians”, in: *Ancient Macedonia, V: Papers Read at the Fifth International Symposium held in Thessaloniki, October 10–15, 1989*, I, Thessaloniki 1993, 470–478; THOMAS, Alexander (n. 7), 37–38.

21 See K. DAHMEN, “The Numismatic Evidence”, in: J. Roisman and I. Worthington (eds.), *A Companion to Ancient Macedonia*, Malden/Oxford 2010, 43–50, with detailed bibliography.

as a result of a feud between tribes of Upper and Lower Macedonia)²², while Thrace remained a loose federation of tribes or kingdoms, thus falling into relative backwater of history: the Thracians would be at best a formidable and ferocious enemy, and also valued mercenaries and slaves, while a minor political power. In the time of Alexander I south-western Thrace had been incorporated to the Macedonian kingdom, and the border was set on the Strymon.

Possibly due to its peripheral status as well as the Bulgarian archaeologists' eagerness to explore local ancient history, Thracian culture is well researched from the point of view of Iranian influences, both Scythian and Persian.²³ The most apparent examples come from the royal and aristocratic burials of the late 6th-4th century BC,²⁴ where the rich grave gifts are clearly of Iranian origin (either imports or, more often, local imitations of Persian forms): silver bowls (the *phialai mesomphalai*, "a particularly distinctive type of Achaemenid tableware") and rhyta ("another quintessential Persian form of vessel"),²⁵ i.e. shapes unknown beforehand in the area, as well as vessels combining Greek shapes with Persian decoration.²⁶ The most spectacular find of such artefacts is the Rogozen treasure, contain-

22 J.R. ELLIS, "The Unification of Macedonia", in: M.B. Hatzopoulos and L.D. Loukopoulou (eds.), *Philip of Macedon*, Athens 1980, 36–47; HAMMOND, *Miracle* (n. 7), 11–20; M.B. HATZOPOULOS, *Macedonian Institutions under the Kings, I: A Historical and Epigraphic Study*, Athens 1996, 463–477. See also Hdt. V 3 for the lack of any unification in Thrace before the Persian invasion, which would corroborate the hypothesis that the Persian monarchic model could influence the political development in the area. For the possible internal political background of Philip's assassination see A.B. BOSWORTH, "Philip II and Upper Macedonia", *CQ*, N.S. 21 (1971), 93–105.

23 Even the selective bibliography of various related subjects in notes 14, 24, 26 of the current paper shows the popularity of the topic among scholars, while the Persian traces in Macedonia are usually only mentioned cursorily in broader contexts.

24 According to R.F. HODDINOTT, "The Thracians and Their Religion", in: A. Fol, B. Nikolov and R.F. Hoddinott, *The New Thracian Treasure from Rogozen, Bulgaria*, London 1986, 21, the Persian imports in Thracian finds "increased in the fifth and fourth centuries". Cf. P. ALEXANDRESCU, "Μηδίζειν. À propos des importations et de l'influence achéménide en Thrace", *Dacia* 30 (1986), 155–158; D. GERGOVA, "Orphic Thrace and Achaemenid Persia", in: J. Nieling and E. Rehm (eds.), *Achaemenid Impact in the Black Sea: Communication of Powers*, Aarhus 2010, 69.

25 ST. J. SIMPSON, "The Royal Table", in: J. Curtis and N. Tallis (eds.), *Forgotten Empire: The World of Ancient Persia*, London 2005, 107. A number of shape variants of these vessels has been discovered in various regions of the Achaemenid empire and in the neighbouring areas, the most popular being the shallow "petaled" Achaemenid *phialai* (for a variety of types see SIMPSON, "Royal Table" (n. 25), 112–120; cf. B. BARR-SHARRAR, "Eastern Influence on the Toreutic Art of Macedonia", in: *Ancient Macedonia, IV: Papers Read at the Fourth International Symposium held in Thessaloniki, September 21–25, 1983*, Thessaloniki 1986, 74–75. These vessel shapes are attested, apart from archaeological material, in tomb paintings, both in Thrace (Kazanlak) and in Macedonia (Agios Athanasios). They are also depicted as apparently typically Persian on the "Darius Vase" by the Darius Painter (Naples, Museo Archeologico Nazionale, inv. 3253).

26 Cf. A. ZOURNATZI, "Inscribed Silver Vessels of the Odrysian Kings: Gifts, Tribute, and the Diffusion of the Forms of 'Achaemenid' Metalware in Thrace", *AJA* 104 (2000), 685 (and notes 13–15 for detailed archaeological reference): "Starting in the period of Persian conquest and continuing until at least the fall of the kingdom of the Odrysaes, a profusion of gold and silver vessels appear in the Thracian archaeological record. The majority of the specimens, for which no native precedents are known from Thrace, are closely related to a widely distributed series of vessel forms, whose 'exotic profiles' are first and foremost associated in this period with the tastes of the Persians." For the presence of silver rhyta and their pottery imitations elsewhere in the Greek world see S. EBBINGHAUS, J. ELLIS JONES, "New

ing 165 silver vessels, out of which a major part consists of *phialai*, otherwise encountered in aristocratic burials. The number of objects in the hoard attests for popularity of the vessels, and also suggests their function as royal gifts similar to those distributed by the Achaemenid rulers as the sign of their friendship or appreciation. Similar finds are yielded by Macedonian sites, even if not in such great numbers, but noteworthy, the Bulgarian part of Thrace was peripheral for the Achaemenids, while their presence in the north-eastern Greece, i.e. in the lands of the Macedonians and in the Macedonian part of Thrace was far more substantial. It is, therefore, unlikely that the Thracians would adopt cultural traits and customs while their south-western neighbours would not; moreover, since Thrace was hardly culturally superior to Macedonia in the 5th century BC, it is unlikely that it made a very strong impact on the emerging power by itself.

However, Macedonian archaeology and history is quite differently conditioned in scholarship: due to modern political situation the emphasis is very often on the Greek character of its culture (even a number of otherwise reliable elaborations suffer from this bias), therefore the studies showing influences other than Greek are not as numerous as in the case of the Thracians. Herodotus turns out to be quite handy for modern politics.

2.1 Grave goods

If we take a closer look at the grave goods in the Macedonian aristocratic burials of the 4th century BC, we find a repertoire very similar to that from Thrace.²⁷ One may argue, of course, that Philip's engagement in the wars with the Thracian tribes exposed the Macedonians to the wealth of that country and to the luxury vessels of Persian origins associated with Thracian aristocracy. There are, however, similar finds from the 5th century BC, as is shown by the recent discoveries, often unpublished or only preliminarily published in field reports.²⁸ Rich aristocratic burials go at least to the beginnings of the 5th century BC (i.e. to the times of Alexander I and the breaking with the Persians), and are similarly equipped both in case of male and female graves, which attests for similar status of royal/aristocratic

Evidence on the Von Mercklin Class of Rhyta: A Black-Gloss Rhyton from Agrileza, Laureion, Attica", *ABSA* 96 (2001), 391–392. For the Graeco-Persian eclectic ware see e.g. GERGOVA, "Orphic" (n. 24), 70, Fig. 3.

27 Noteworthy, as Z. ARCHIBALD, "Macedonia and Thrace", in: J. Roisman and I. Worthington (eds.), *A Companion to Ancient Macedonia*, Malden/Oxford 2010, 331–333, has shown, the similarities in burial customs between Thrace and Macedon go to earlier periods, also the change from earth-cut pit burials to monumental forms occurs roughly at the same time. Of particular interest is the following observation: "The liberal provision of individual grave goods, including weapons and armour, and of additional personal items, particularly perfume flasks and jewellery, in a period when such lavish and conspicuous disposal is far less evident in burials in other parts of the Aegean, makes the ranked burials of men and women in Macedonia and Thrace distinctive."

28 These most important finds come from the area of Vergina and in the area of Livadia (necropolis of Aiani). Among the most interesting artefact yielded by the site of Aiani are bronze *phialai mesomphaloi*, unpublished but dated preliminarily to the second half of the 6th century BC (S. DESCAMPS-LEQUIME and K. CHARATZOPOULOU, *Au royaume d'Alexandre le Grand: La Macédoine antique*, Paris 2011, 552, cat. 345–346 (G. Karamitrou-Mentesidi). In Vergina the most spectacular and informative find is the unlooted tomb of the "Lady of Aigai" in the necropolis of the queens of the Archaic period. Dated to ca. 500 BC the tomb contained rich golden jewellery as well as bronze *phialai mesomphaloi* (DESCAMPS-LEQUIME and CHARATZOPOULOU, *Royaume d'Alexandre* (n. 28), 275, cat. 156 (A. Kottaridi), with earlier bibliography).

women in the society. In all instances we do find luxury vessels as grave goods, we also note quite early the tendency to monumentalize the tombs themselves and to furnish their interiors in the likeness of a banquet room with *klinai*.

The motif of reclining banqueters in Greek art and culture, which appeared at the beginning of the 6th century BC and was quickly disseminated throughout the Greek world, has been convincingly traced to its oriental origins by Rhea Thönges-Stringaris and consequently by Jean-Marie Dentzer.²⁹ His analyses are concerned, however, in the first place with the representations of living people and actual symposia, and only secondarily as visions of the afterlife. The motif in funerary context became very popular in Attica in the 3rd century BC, even though it is attested by rare examples from the Archaic and Classical age, respectively in Kerameikos burials and in vase paintings; funeral rites including the use of a *kline* are also described by Plato in his *Laws* (XII 947d–e), and the common academic opinion is now that his idea was inspired by the Macedonian customs rather than Italian.³⁰ *Kline* burials became quite early common on the fringes of the Greek world: in Italy, and especially in Etruria, in Ionia under Persian influence, and in Thracio-Macedonia. In the case of the latter this theme seems to appear at a slightly later date than the actual Persian presence in the area: the 6th/5th centuries BC graves in the necropolis of Sindos show no traces of *klinai*, even though they abound in miniature models of banquet-related furniture and vessels³¹, while mid-5th century BC yielded evidence for the use of *klinai* in the form of holes in the floor that indicate the existence of a disintegrated couch, and, more importantly, in the remains of ivory decoration.³²

One of the hypotheses relating to the proliferation of banquet-style burials, either seated or reclining, is the influence of the Orphic beliefs concerning the afterlife, which may be rooted in Late Bronze Age Thracian religious reform,³³ and for whose imagery the oriental banqueting practice and iconography made a perfect complement. Orphism and related beliefs (e.g. the Dionysiac cults) penetrated Macedonia and became very popular since at least the beginning of the 4th century BC;³⁴ the same applies to Italy. Regardless of the ideological background of its popularity, the iconographic motif of the reclining pose of the symposiasts should be linked with the influence of oriental imagery and customs, which are attested in various cultures of the Mesopotamian and Anatolian areas. The composition of

29 R.N. THÖNGES-STRINGARIS, “Das griechische Totenmahl”, *MDAI(A)* 80 (1965), 1–99; J.-M. DENTZER, *Le motif du banquet couché dans le Proche-Orient et le monde grec du VIIe au IVe siècle avant J.-C.*, Rome 1982, esp. 21–58; see also E.P. BAUGHAN, *Couched in Death: Klinai and Identity in Anatolia and Beyond*, Madison 2013, 267.

30 BAUGHAN, *Couched* (n. 29), 19–21.

31 R.A. TOMLINSON, “Furniture in the Macedonian Tombs”, in: *Ancient Macedonia, V: Papers Read at the Fifth International Symposium held in Thessaloniki, October 10–15, 1989*, III, Thessaloniki 1993, 1496–1499. The Sindos graves are inhumation burials of the cut in the soil type, characteristic for the Archaic period, not the cremations prevailing at least since late 5th century BC.

32 BAUGHAN, *Couched* (n. 29), 268.

33 GERGOVA, “Orphic” (n. 24), 73.

34 A. KOTTARIDI, “The Royal Banquet: A Capital Institution”, in: Kottaridē A. and Walker S., *Heracles to Alexander the Great: Treasures from the Royal Capital of Macedon, a Hellenistic Kingdom in the Age of Democracy: A collaboration between the Ashmolean Museum, University of Oxford, and the Hellenic Ministry of Culture and Tourism, 17th Ephorate of Prehistoric and Classical Antiquities*, Oxford 2011, 167.

late Classical and Hellenistic Macedonian tomb friezes with the banquet scenes (e.g. in Agios Athanasios), their almost narrative quality, resembles the Archaic period eastern reliefs (e.g. the Ödemiş relief)³⁵ rather than the Greek vase paintings of the Archaic/Classical periods, which should suggest the survival of oriental forms with very small alterations, unlike in Athens and Etruria.³⁶

Macedonian luxury vessels found in the aristocratic graves show close similarity to the Thracian ones, and therefore to the Persian Achaemenid style. Among the bronze- and silverware we find shallow bowls (*phialai*) in the shapes characteristic for the Persian influence, with the lotus petals pattern around the *omphalos*, and a libation “frying-pan”-shaped utensils (*patera*), with the handle’s end shaped as a ram head, an ornament typical for Persian wares (the latter is attested in Tomb III in the Great Tumulus in Vergina and also in the early 3rd century BC Heuzey tomb β in Palatitsia, it was also imitated in gilded/silvered terracotta vessels).³⁷ The Persian-style *phialai* appear in funerary contexts as early as the late Archaic age (beginning of the 5th century BC), first and foremost in aristocratic female burials (the necropolis by the “tomb of Rhomaïos” in Vergina), and in the 5th century BC necropolis of Archontiko near Pella (both male and female burials).³⁸

Achaemenid influence has also been noted in the details of the *klinai* in Macedonian tombs, namely in the decoration of the leg casings in the form of “drooping leaves” as well as alternating tori and scotiae which resembles that of the stools upon which the Persian kings sit in a number of Achaemenid representations.³⁹ These *klinai* were uncovered in cist graves in Pella, dated to the turn of the 4th and 3rd century BC, but a golden ring found in Pydna, with the representation of a female figure seated on a Achaemenid style royal throne is dated to mid-4th century BC, attesting an earlier date when such forms would be known.⁴⁰

Much as we may safely assume that the presence of the Persians in the Thraco-Macedonian region at the end of the 6th and the beginning of the 5th centuries BC is the most important factor for the dissemination of “Achaemenid” luxury vessel forms and possibly also other classes of movable material, a number of aspects of this process come up in scholar-

35 J.-M. DENTZER, “Reliefs au «banquet» dans l’Asie Mineure du V^e siècle av. J.-C.”, *RA*, N.S. 2 (1969), 195–200.

36 Cf. N. HIRSCHLAND RAMAGE, “A Lydian Funerary Banquet”, *AS* 29 (1979), 91–93.

37 Finds from the Great Tumulus in Vergina: bronze *patera* from Tomb II (M. ANDRONICOS, *Vergina: The Royal Tombs*, Athens 1993, 157, Fig. 123), silver *patera* from Tomb III (ANDRONICOS, *Vergina* (n. 37), 213, Figs. 181–182); bronze *patera* from Pydna, dated to the second half of the 4th century BC: Thessaloniki Archaeological Museum, inv. Py 892 (DESCAMPS-LEQUIME and CHARATZOPOULOU, *Royaume* (n. 28), 404, cat. 257/2 (E.-B. Tsigarida); silvered terracotta imitation dated to ca. 340–320: Thessaloniki Archaeological Museum, inv. Mth 7547 (DESCAMPS-LEQUIME and CHARATZOPOULOU, *Royaume* (n. 28), 315, cat. 196/9 (P. Adam-Veleni)).

38 S. DROUGOU, “Macedonian Metallurgy: An Expression of Royalty”, in: Kottaridē A. and Walker S., *Heracles to Alexander the Great: Treasures from the Royal Capital of Macedon, a Hellenistic Kingdom in the Age of Democracy: A collaboration between the Ashmolean Museum, University of Oxford, and the Hellenic Ministry of Culture and Tourism, 17th Ephorate of Prehistoric and Classical Antiquities*, Oxford 2011, 182–184.

39 S.A. PASPALAS, “On Persian-type furniture in Macedonia: the recognition and transmission of forms”, *AJA* 104 (2000), 535, and notes 21–28 for archaeological reference.

40 PASPALAS, “Persian” (n. 39), 548–550 and Fig. 2. It is probably an import from the workshops in western Asia Minor (DESCAMPS-LEQUIME and CHARATZOPOULOU, *Royaume* (n. 28), 383, cat. 240 (E.-B. Tsigarida).

ship. One may wonder, for instance, to what extent such artefacts attest a distant echo of the Achaemenid custom of gift distribution and the satrapal imitation of central court, which would be of particular interest from the point of view of the adoption of Persian customs in Macedonia. In the archaeological analysis of luxurious metal objects found in the Ionian satrapies, Margaret C. Miller presents the following opinion: “The [archaeological] evidence indicates (1) a pattern of satrapal imitation of the royal behaviour in distributing gifts, including drinking vessels in gold, silver, and glass, with a view both to bolstering relations among the Iranians in the satrapies, and to developing rapport with the local elites; (2) the production of prestige items under satrapal patronage for court consumption, local gifting and possibly submission of symbolic tribute to the centre; (3) the parallel production of prestige items outside of satrapal workshops in emulation of court arts with possibly their own circles of gift-exchange distribution”.⁴¹ The same may have been true for the westernmost satrapy that Macedonia and Thrace had become for a short time, and even if the custom would have been forgotten, its traces may have survived in other forms of behaviour or rituals.

Another problematic question is the presence of “oriental” forms and tendencies in the material culture of the area before the Persian invasion. Beryl Barr-Sharrar points out possible survival of Phrygian forms, giving as an example the very popular duck/swan head finials of silver ladles and strainers, encountered in numerous 4th century BC Macedonian graves, which repeat the type that had been popular in Phrygia in the 8th century BC.⁴² Noteworthy, pre-Cimmerian Phrygian burials, both in the great royal tumulus and in lesser tumuli, contain a selection of banquet-related vessels, and among them bronze *omphalos*-bowls that resemble very closely the shape and decoration (petaled and ribbed, among others) associated with Achaemenid vessels, which actually can be modelled on the Phrygian *phiai*.⁴³ Much as the conclusion of Barr-Sharrar’s overview of the oriental influences on Macedonian toreutics ends with the conclusion that by the time of Alexander the local production was highly eclectic, combining the eastern elements with the generally Greek character of the vessels, the role and function of both Phrygian and Persian models still requires further contextual study. One of the objectives of such study should be the assessment to what extent earlier, Geometric and Archaic period contacts with the East, shaped the 6th/5th

41 M.C. MILLER, “Luxury Toreutic in the Western Satrapies: Court-Inspired Gift-Exchange Diffusion”, in: B. Jacobs and R. Rollinger (eds.), *Der Achämenidenhof. The Achaemenid Court. Akten des 2. Internationalen Kolloquiums zum Thema »Vorderasien im Spannungsfeld klassischer und altorientalischer Überlieferungen« Landgut Castelen bei Basel, 23.–25. Mai 2007*, Wiesbaden 2010, 856. The archaeological material presented consist mostly of a number of variants of *phiai*, uncovered in the first place in Asia Minor (today’s Turkey), but also with analogies from Macedonia and Thrace (today’s Greece and Bulgaria).

42 E.g. Thessaloniki Archaeological Museum, inv. MD 2550; similar finds in the royal tombs of the Great Tumulus in Vergina. Cf. BARR-SHARRAR, “Eastern” (n. 25), 72–73. J. BOARDMAN, *The Greeks Overseas: The Archaeology of their Early Colonies and Trade*, London 1973, 228, suggests that Archaic pottery from Macedonia is closer to its Phrygian counterpart than to the Greek models.

43 R.S. YOUNG, *Three Great Early Tumuli*, Philadelphia 1981, 130–147 (see also Photo II), presents the collection of 98 petaled *omphalos*-bowls in the Tumulus MM, interpreted as a royal burial. E.L. KOHLER, *The Lesser Phrygian Tumuli, I: The Inhumations*, Philadelphia 1995, 185–190, presents the assemblages of grave goods of the “great” pre-Cimmerian Phrygian tumuli and shows the continuation of their character in post-Cimmerian period.

century BC relationships with Persia, and to what extent the Persian material culture incorporated the Phrygian elements, which in turn could have been familiar to the subdued or adjoined peoples of the Thraco-Macedonian region, and thus easily adopted.

2.2 Tomb architecture

Notwithstanding all above, out of all the features of the Macedonian burials the greatest controversy is caused by the architectural form of the tombs, their development and origin. One of the most characteristic landmarks in today's northern Greece are the tumuli of the *Makedonikoi taphoi*, which, however, mostly date from times after Alexander. They are the developed form of the so-called Macedonian tombs, attested for certain in the second half of the 4th century BC and surviving until the Roman conquest in a number of architectural variants which combine the main layout characteristics. They are in their vast majority structures consisting of one chamber or a chamber and an antechamber of various proportions, with a Ionian or Doric façade attached, whose function is purely decorative, since the whole construction depends on the barrel vaulted ceiling.

The invention of the latter, local or imported, is one of the numerous problematic subjects in Macedonian archaeology. In the otherwise outdated – as far as evidence is concerned – paper on this architectonic feature, Richard A. Tomlinson pointed out one important factor: that the Macedonians, unlike their neighbours, the Thracians, had not developed (or inherited) the corbel vault, and generally hardly had substantial tradition of stone architecture that would allow for the invention of such a sophisticated technique as the keystone vault. He argued further that in case of the fully developed Macedonian tombs, which he dated to the period after Alexander's campaign, the vaulted ceiling was just "a conventional substitute for wooden roofs in tombs", popular in earlier periods, an adaptation of wooden architecture in stone analogical to the development of Doric order buildings.⁴⁴ However, there is no archaeological indication that wooden structures would use construction methods resembling the vault (the pitched or gabled roof come as the closest), at least not in the period in question,⁴⁵ therefore the term "substitute" seems not necessarily the most appropriate one ("replacement" might serve better). The dating and origin of the vaulted constructions of the tombs has become one of the most problematic issues in scholarship on the topic, the most popular argument for its late development being that it could have been observed in the Achaemenid territory only once the army of Alexander had landed there,

44 R.A. TOMLINSON, "Vaulting Techniques of the Macedonian Tombs", in: *Ancient Macedonia, II: Papers Read at the Second International Symposium held in Thessaloniki, 19–24 August, 1973*, Thessaloniki 1977, 473–474; the publication of the paper had preceded by months or weeks Andronikos' discovery of the tombs in the Great Tumulus in Vergina, which would have most likely changed the author's perspective. Wooden graves covered with tumuli and with painted decoration are attested in the Phrygian Tatarli in the Achaemenid period (first half of the 5th century BC according to radiocarbon data); see L. SUMMERER, "From Tatarli to Munich: The Recovery of a Painted Wooden Tomb Chamber in Phrygia", in: I. Delemen et al. (eds.), *The Achaemenid Impact on Local Populations and Cultures in Anatolia (Sixth–Fourth Centuries B.C. Papers Presented at the International Workshop, Istanbul 20–21 May 2005)*, Istanbul 2007, 141–145.

45 KOHLER, *Lesser* (n. 43), 174, cites one case but expresses doubts about its early date: "One Phrygian chamber under a tumulus, that at Tatarli, has been published as having a segmentally arched barrel-vaulted roof. This writer, however, believes that the vaulting, if actual, must belong to the date of reuse by the Romans. Certainly no evidence for the Phrygian use of vaulting has been found at Gordion."

and rejection the possibility of independent invention, while the latter could have been as well inspired by earlier contacts with eastern architecture.⁴⁶

What remains certain, is that Macedonian and Thracian monumental tombs in the 4th century BC clearly developed distinctive forms, with the “beehive” tombs, related in their construction to the Late Helladic domed tombs and corbel vaults, as well as the Dark Ages and Archaic tholos tombs, in Thrace,⁴⁷ and the proper barrel vault ones, reminiscent of the oriental inventions, in Macedon. Sepulchral architecture in these two areas does share certain similarities, e.g. monumental form and painted decoration,⁴⁸ but the unique feature of the Macedonian tombs are the “fake” façades.

Macedonian tombs, unlike for instance the Nereid Monument from Xanthos, do not imitate Greek temples or any other buildings in their construction, even if the character of the façades might suggest so: the arrangement of chambers is more likely derived from house architecture. The question that perplexes archaeologists is whether this unusual form for built tombs is an entirely local invention, which had developed independently of any direct influences, with just an ornamental addition of a Greek element, or contrariwise had been modelled upon other structures. If the “Macedonian tomb” is not a local invention, its model ought to be sought outside Greece, and the most obvious candidates have always been the varied forms of the monumental tombs encountered in a number of regions of the western part of the Achaemenid empire, as well as in Persis herself (the Phrygian, Carian, Lycian and Persian tombs; note especially Macedonia’s legendary and historical bonds with Phrygia).⁴⁹

46 P.W. LEHMANN, “The So-Called Tomb of Philip II: A Different Interpretation”, *AJA* 84 (1980), 528–529; argumentation based mainly on T.D. BOYD, “The Arch and Vault in Greek Architecture”, *AJA* 82 (1978), 83–100, esp. 88–89. Further discussion includes e.g. W.M. CALDER III, “Diadem and Barrel-Vault: A Note”, *AJA* 85 (1981), 334–335; P.W. LEHMANN, “The So-Called Tomb of Philip II: An Addendum”, *AJA* 86 (1982), 437–442; E.A. FREDRICKSMEYER, “Once More the Diadem and Barrel-Vault at Vergina”, *AJA* 87 (1983), 99–102.

47 N. THEODOSSIEV, “The Beehive Tombs in Thrace and Their Connection with Funerary Monuments in Thessaly, Macedonia, and Other Parts of the Ancient World”, in: *Ancient Macedonia, VII: Macedonia from the Iron Age to the death of Philip II: Papers Read at the Seventh International Symposium, held in Thessaloniki, October 14–18, 2002*, Thessaloniki 2007, 423–428. A small number of similar structures is known from Macedonia, and also in Thrace at some point, probably early in the Hellenistic period, the forms resembling the “Macedonian tombs” appear, e.g. in the famous necropolis of Sveshtari (A. FOL, *The Thracian Tomb Near the Village of Sveshtari*, Sofia 1986, 10).

48 For the development of the Thracian tomb paintings before the Hellenistic age see M. ČIČIKOVA, “Le système décoratif dans la peinture murale en Thrace”, in: *Ancient Macedonia, VI: Papers Read at the Sixth International Symposium held in Thessaloniki, October 15–19, 1996*, Thessaloniki 1999, 333–335. For the surviving painted decoration in Achaemenid Phrygia see SUMMERER, “Tatarlı” (n. 44), 132–141. Another area where tomb paintings are abundant and form a major contribution to funeral customs is Italy (in particular the Etruscan and Samnite tombs). The possible common origins of all these traditions seem to require more detailed study, and the international conference on wall paintings from Macedonia and Magna Graecia in 1996 was a step towards it; unfortunately the papers presented were contributions to the study of both areas separately and no attempt at a synthetic approach had been made (for the proceedings see: A. PONTRANDOLFO (ed.), *La Pittura parietale in Macedonia e Magna Grecia. Atti del Convegno Internazionale di Studi in ricordo di Mario Napoli, Salerno–Paestum, 21–23 novembre 1996*, Salerno 2002). Cf. DENTZER, *Motif* (n. 29), 58, for the dissemination of eastern motifs in these areas.

49 Their development prior to the 4th century BC is discussed by J. FEDAK, *Monumental Tombs of the*

Out of these the Lycian rock-cut tombs with elaborate façades employing Greek architectural orders elements for external decoration are the closest analogies and they are usually the obvious candidates for imitation. The only shortcoming of this hypothesis is, at least seemingly, that they develop roughly at the same time as the developed Macedonian façade tombs, i.e. in the 4th century BC. Archaeology, however, is not a science in which *tertium non datur*, and in this particular case one might argue for a third option: parallel development based on the same model, or a variety of these. It is not entirely impossible, either, that, since the appearance of façades in Lycia is by a notch earlier than in Macedonia,⁵⁰ this particular feature could have been copied from these monuments.⁵¹ The close relationships between Philip of Macedon and Pixodarus of Caria are just one piece of evidence for extensive contacts between the western satrapies of the Achaemenid empire and Macedonia⁵², and there is no reason to suspect that they had been limited to one state only; moreover, rock-cut tombs are not unknown in Caria.

I am aware of treading on uncharted and dangerous land here, especially in an age of scholarly scepticism and hyper-criticism; “uncharted” that is by hard evidence, be it archaeological, be it textual, of the transition of forms.⁵³ But, as has already been mentioned, the general problem with Macedonia is the almost complete lack of sources, therefore a not impossible hypothesis should not be discarded on the grounds of lack of textual evidence: there simply is no contemporary evidence for almost every aspect of Macedonian life and culture. Later Roman authors on their part were hardly interested in such topics, therefore their silence is no argument, either. Moreover, if we are ready to accept the fact that “literary” topics and motifs travel over large distances, often without leaving very clear traces of transitions, we should probably agree that “visual” topics and motifs can do the same and in the very same way.⁵⁴

An intriguing feature of one of the rock-cut Lycian tombs in Telmessos is that it bears the name of Amyntas, son of Hermiygas, as its owner – a name that is otherwise encoun-

Hellenistic Age, Toronto 1990, 29–64.

50 The most perplexing case is the *trompe-l'oeil* façade in the so-called tomb of Eurydice, the earliest attested feature of this kind. Its dating to mid-4th century BC coincides with the appearance of façades in Lycia, but I do not think it makes the hypothesis of cultural contact which influenced Macedonian tomb architecture invalid.

51 On the Greek influence on Lycian architecture see E.A. RAIMOND, “Hellenization and Lycian Cults during the Achaemenid Period”, in: C. Tuplin (ed.), *Persian Responses: Political and Cultural Interaction with(in) the Achaemenid Empire*, Swansea 2007, 149, with extensive bibliography of detailed topics.

52 See THOMAS, *Alexander* (n. 7), 186–189, for a brief overview of the sources for the mutual knowledge of their respective countries by the Macedonians and the Persians.

53 Noteworthy, some sites in Asia Minor, including Caria, show that in places where there were not rock faces available built imitations of the same structures were erected, their construction very similar to that of early Macedonian elaborate cist tombs, which develop earlier. This, again, is not a proof of influences but one of the elements of the puzzle that should prompt questions concerning possible cultural exchanges.

54 Cf. PASPALAS, “Persian” (n. 39), 543–548; R. STONEMAN, “Persian Aspects of the Romance Tradition”, in: R. Stoneman, K. Erickson and I. Netton (eds.), *The Alexander Romance in Persia and the East*, Groningen 2012, 5: “We should bear in mind how easy it is for stories to cross language barriers, in ways that in our more literate culture are difficult to understand”. Possibly our literate and hypercritical culture hinders the interpretation of the transitions in art and architecture just as well.

tered only in Macedonia and in the Persian empire, and is attested there as one of the dynastic names.⁵⁵ Unfortunately we know nothing more about the man buried inside or about the grave goods, since all tombs of this kind had been looted. The tomb in question is probably roughly contemporary with the construction of the Tomb II from the Great Tumulus in Vergina, but as it has already been mentioned, some structures of the same type in Lycia are earlier and their development seems to chronologically coincide with the development of the typical “Macedonian tombs” or slightly precede them; they are also very difficult to date due to the lack of easily interpreted stylistic sequences and absence of grave goods.⁵⁶ Its similarity to the Macedonian structures is striking in both the employment of the Ionian order for decoration and in the details of the door, the latter modelled on the typical Greek door but in both cases executed in stone. The main difference is that Macedonian tombs in their vast majority feature half-columns and/or half-pillars, while the Lycian and Carian rock-cut tombs usually have full columns carved in rock, but in both cases the opposite is encountered (free standing columns in Macedonia, whole façades carved in relief in Asia Minor).

We also find earlier examples of decorative façades cut in rock face to decorate the entrances to the tombs dug in the rock in the Anatolian area. These date as early as the 7th century BC in Phrygia (where we also find the tumulus forms reminding us of the eventual finishing of the Macedonian tombs, especially that apart from Macedonia they are the only ones that do not possess the crepidoma),⁵⁷ and then they become popular under the Achaemenid rule. Noteworthy, their insides were carved in rock in a way that mirrors (or is mirrored by) the constructed vaulted structures, and were equipped with features resembling the *klinai* popular in Thrace and Macedonia.⁵⁸ In the earlier Persian tradition we also encounter built tombs, whose most well-known example is the tomb of Cyrus the Great in Pasargadae, which had been ordered to be renovated by Alexander (one may wonder whether in case Alexander had decided to emulate the burial architecture of the Persians, there would be no mention of it among the historians, especially those criticising the adoption of oriental customs).⁵⁹ It could possibly inspire the monumental structures such as the

55 *RE* I, s.v. “Amyntas”, lists a number of non-Macedonian and non-Anatolian persons of this name, but all of them lived in the period after Alexander. According to Herodotus (VIII 136; cf. OLBRYCHT, “Macedonia” (n. 16), 343) Amyntas II was the son of Bubares and Gygaea, and ruled in Carian Alabanda, therefore the name could have become popular in the area. It is, of course, possible that FEDAK, *Monumental* (n. 49), 98, is right when he assumes that the tomb is of later date (the stylistic features are atypical and do not allow for dating on the stylistic grounds) and “it is conceivable that the Amyntas tomb belonged to a prominent Macedonian who died at Telmessos”.

56 FEDAK, *Monumental* (n. 49), 96–101; S. DROUGOU and C. SAATSOGLOU-PALIADELI, *Vergina: The Land and Its History*, Athens 2005, 183–186

57 D. GORZELANY, *Architektura grobowców macedońskich*, Kraków 1997 (master thesis, archives of the Institute of Archaeology of the Jagiellonian University) 84–85, but see FEDAK, *Monumental* (n. 49), 56–57, for the inner structure of the tumulus, on the one hand resembling the Macedonian practice of building the tombs above ground, on the other hand constructing protective architectonic structures over them to prevent the tumulus from collapsing.

58 See FEDAK, *Monumental* (n. 49), e.g. 93, 95, 96 for various tombs. The catalogue of Macedonian *klinai* with exhaustive information on their distribution and types can be found in the monographic study: K. SISMANIDES [K. ΣΙΣΜΑΝΙΔΗΣ], *Κλίνες και κλισιδείες κατασκευές των Μακεδονικών τάφων*, Athens 1997.

59 For the dramatic change in style between Cyrus the Great and Darius the Great see B. JACOBS, “From

Nereid Monument or the Mausoleum in Halicarnassus, which in turn could have added to the idea of the constructed Macedonian monumental tombs.

All this shows that actually the two theories need not be entirely exclusive: the exact form of the tombs, combining the decorative façades and the constructed, vaulted chambers, may be characteristic for Macedonia, where the development sequence would be as follows: cist or built in the ground tombs with painted decoration on the inside walls (e.g. tombs from the eastern necropolis in Pella, dated to after the establishment of the new capital by Archelaos at the turn of the 5th and 4th centuries; Tomb I, “of Persephone” in the Great Tumulus, dated to the first half of the 4th century BC), vaulted structures without façade and vaulted structures with façades. At the same time the general notion of adding a decorative façade to a vaulted tomb could have been modelled on eastern inventions – only that they would be known before Alexander and would have inspired not only the Macedonians.

The followers of the imitation model usually prefer to date the fully developed form to the times of or even after Alexander, since such dating allows for making the returning troops responsible for the adoption of the façade structure in Macedonia. This, however, requires the dating of e.g. all the tombs in the Great Tumulus in Vergina to the late second half of the 4th century BC, namely after the death of Philip Arrhidaios in 317. It also requires the assumption that Tomb II belongs to Arrhidaios and Adea Eurydice, while the present author adheres to the more common identification with Philip II and one of his wives, and perceives the evidence raised against it as hardly convincing.⁶⁰

If we, therefore, assume that it was Alexander who in 336 BC buried his father in state in what we now know as Tomb II in the Great Tumulus, we must accept the earlier dating of the fully developed façade structure of the Macedonian tomb. It is true that the decorative façades come into fashion and become increasingly popular in the second half of the 4th century BC, i.e. after Alexander’s expedition (note, however, the growing number of wealthy persons who could afford such burials), while the already fully developed vaulted structure of earlier time seems to be devoid of such decoration. However, the illusionistic

Gabled Hut to Rock-Cut Tomb”, in: J. Curtis and St J. Simpson (eds.), *The World of Achaemenid Persia: History, Art and Society in Iran and the Ancient Near East*, London/New York 2010, 91–101

60 Tomb II had been identified as Philip’s by the original excavator, Manolis Andronikos (see the substantial summary of his assessments in ANDRONIKOS, *Vergina* (n. 33), 97–197, and bibliography of original reports on pages 238–239), but the identification produced an ongoing scholarly debate. The identification was contested by LEHMANN, “So-Called” (n. 46), 527–531. E.N. BORZA, “The Royal Macedonian Tombs and the Paraphernalia of Alexander the Great”, *Phoenix* 41 (1987), 105–121, gives a sound and reliable overview of archaeological and anthropological scholarship on the subject within the state of art of the date of the publication. For significant recent contributions see E.N. BORZA and O. PALAGIA, “The Chronology of the Macedonian Royal Tombs at Vergina”, *JDAI* 22 (2007), 81–125; D.W.J. GILL, “Inscribed Silver Plate from Tomb II at Vergina: Chronological Implications”, *Hesperia* 77 (2008), 335–358; M.B. HATZOPOULOS, “The Burial of the Dead (at Vergina), or The Unending Controversy on the Identity of the Occupants of Tomb II”, *Tekmeria* 9 (2008), 91–118; J. MUSGRAVE and J. PRAG, “The Occupants of Tomb II at Vergina: Why Arrhidaios and Eurydice Must Be Excluded”, in: A. Kottaridē and S. Walker (eds.), *Heracles to Alexander the Great: Treasures from the Royal Capital of Macedon, a Hellenistic Kingdom in the Age of Democracy: A collaboration between the Ashmolean Museum, University of Oxford, and the Hellenic Ministry of Culture and Tourism, 17th Ephorate of Prehistoric and Classical Antiquities*, Oxford 2011, 127–130.

façade in the tomb of Eurydice, mother of Philip II, which must be dated to mid-4th century BC and therefore certainly predates Alexander's expedition, attests the presence of the notion of adding a Greek façade to the structure, even if at that time it had not been executed architecturally but in painting, and not outside the tomb but inside. Given the purely decorative character of the façades in Macedonian tombs the execution is of secondary importance from the point of view of its functionality; noteworthy also in the case of Anatolian rock-cut façade tombs the external decoration has no structural function whatsoever.

The controversy about the façades notwithstanding, it is obvious that the idea and form of the monumental aristocratic tomb had appeared much earlier, even if their ultimate form evolved in the 4th century BC. As has been mentioned before, ever since the last decades of the 6th century BC the Macedonians kept close relations with the Persian empire. We should leave aside the controversy over the *yauna takabara*, the *kausia* and whether the Persians distinguished the Macedonians from the Ionian Greeks in Asia Minor, and who is therefore represented on the relief decorating the tomb of Darius the Great in Naqsh-e Rostam, which falls beyond the scope of this paper.⁶¹ What matters in the present context is that there is a possibility that the Macedonians witnessed monumental grave architecture both in the western satrapies and in Persis herself much earlier than in the second half of the 4th century BC, and in the process of their own emancipation and struggle for power and hegemony adopted the architectural models for the wealthy burials of their own kings and aristocrats. Even if they turned towards the Hellenic world in their political aspirations, they apparently based their monarchic system on the Persian model combined with the early Archaic Greek organisation, and this called for a commemoration of the rulers in a way that was not to be found within the contemporary Hellenic model, which had just (or some time before) abandoned the notion of monarchic rule and strove to erase its evidence from the social memory and consciousness.

3 Perspectives

The elements of material culture discussed above do not exhaust possible affinities with Achaemenid art that can be traced in Macedonia, or Thraco-Macedonia before Alexander. One can easily add at least two more instances, which might contribute to the topic, one of them possessing ample scholarship, i.e. the motif of the royal hunt,⁶² and particularly the lion hunt, the other well researched from the numismatic point of view, but hardly from the

61 The most exhaustive and up-to-date account of this controversy, with ample reference, is presented by R. ROLLINGER, "Yaunā takabarā und Maginnāta tragende, Ionier". Zum Problem der 'griechischen' Thronträgerfiguren in Naqsh-e Rostam und Persepolis", in: R. Rollinger and B. Truschneegg (eds.), *Altertum und Mittelmeerraum: Die antike Welt diesseits und jenseits der Levante. Festschrift für Peter W. Haider zum 60. Geburtstag*, Stuttgart 2006, 365–400.

62 The most up-to-date and thorough monograph is M. SEYER, *Der Herrscher als Jäger. Untersuchungen zur königlichen Jagd in persischen und makedonischen Reich vom 6. – 4. Jahrhundert v. Chr. Sowie unter den Diadochen Alexanders des Großen*, Vienna 2007, see esp. 43–91. For the Thracian analogies, such as the 4th century BC paintings from Alexandrovo tomb and toreutics, see M. VASSILEVA, "Achaemenid Interfaces: Thracian and Anatolian representations of elite status", *Bollettino di Archeologia on line* Volume speciale G/G1/4 (2010), 40–44

[www.bollettinodiarcheologiaonline.beniculturali.it accessed March 20, 2014].

iconographic one, i.e. the coinage of Akanthos, featuring the fighting animals, the lion and the bull.⁶³

The latter seems to be hardly explainable on the grounds of local imagery, while it might be indebted to the Persian iconography of cosmic struggle, present among others on one of the reliefs of the Apadana in Persepolis, and rooted in earlier Anatolian imagery.⁶⁴ In Persian art, as Margaret Cool Root shows, the symbolism of the struggle scene is not necessarily that of killing, vanquishing or subjugating, but that of the union of the forces of nature and cosmic forces:

“The lion and the bull were the two most powerful and noble of beasts in the Iranian sphere. The emblem projects their union in a symbolic landscape of abundance signifying the combined powers of nature brought together by and for the Achaemenid empire. ... Finally, the lion was a symbol of the sun and the bull a symbol of the moon. ... Their union of forces is expressed by the animal symplegma on the palace facades and also in abstract form by the symbol of a solar disk inscribed with a crescent moon that hangs in the sky above the fire altar worshiped by each Achaemenid king on his rock-cut tomb relief.”⁶⁵

The coins of Akanthos make up a particularly interesting set of images in relation to this tradition. Three silver issues dated to ca. 510–480 BC, i.e. very soon after the appearance of the Persians in the area, present on their obverses the protomes of a bull (BMC Macedonia: Acanthus 7) and of lion (BMC Macedonia: Acanthus 8), as well as the group of the lion attacking the bull (BMC Macedonia: Acanthus 1). Around 480 BC these coins are replaced by a new stylistic type, with the dominance of the group of the lion attacking the bull (BMC Macedonia: Acanthus 22), although the bull protome type was repeated type repeated in a 470–390 BC emission (BMC Macedonia: Acanthus 34). While the later type represents the animals according to the Greek stylistic tradition of the time (properly rendered musculature, realistic details; the bulls’ bodies are heavy, with large heads and relatively short horns; the lions’ bodies are lean and the attacking feline sits on the bull’s back with all four paws in a realistic manner), the earlier series is more interesting from the stylistic point of view.

At first glance the animals seem to possess typical archaistic traits, but a closer examination of the images shows that they hardly resemble their counterparts from contemporary

63 Their metrology and chronology is discussed e.g. in J. DESNEUX, “Les tétradrachmes d’Acanthe”, *RBN* 95 (1949), 5–120; O. PICARD, “Le lion et le taureau sur les tétradrachmes d’Acanthe”, in: G. Le Rider et al. (eds.), *Kraay–Mørkholm Essays: Numismatic Studies in Memory of C. M. Kraay and O. Mørkholm*, Louvain-la-Neuve 1989, 225–232; T. FIGUEIRA, *The Power of Money: Coinage and Politics in the Athenian Empire*, Philadelphia 2011, 138. The only paper that touches upon the iconography of these coins and even suggests the oriental (Mesopotamian), but also Mycenaean origin of the image is J. DESNEUX, “Sur quelques représentations du « lion à la proie » en glyptique et numismatique antiques”, *RBN* 106 (1960), 10–16.

64 For earlier eastern analogies see three papers in B.J. Collins (ed.), *A History of the Animal World in the Ancient Near East*, Leiden 2002: A.C. GUNTER, “Animals in Anatolian Art” 95 (13th century BC Anatolia); C. BRENIQUET, “Animals in Mesopotamian Art”, 160–161 (Sumer; note the possible substitution of the bull by the king in the fight of the felines representing the hostile forces); M.C. ROOT, “Animals in the Art of Ancient Iran”, 181 (proto-Elamite art), 192–203 (Achaemenid art).

65 ROOT, “Animals” (n. 64), 201–202.

or earlier Greek (Attic) art, such as for instance the lions tearing the bull on the reconstructed pediment of the Old Athena Temple on the Athenian Acropolis (second half of the 6th century BC), or on the lower register of the *oinochoe* attributed to the painter Lydos (ca. 560 BC; Berlin, Antikensammlungen, inv. F 1732). The lions on the Akanthos coins are leaner and their manes are rendered in a far more schematic way, but it is the bulls that make the main difference: their horns are elongated and curved, and their muzzles relatively thin, very much like in the Achaemenid representations. Stylistically they are clearly closer to the rendering of the scene as known from Achaemenid art, for instance from the Apadana in Persepolis. This particular relief is most likely of later date than the coins, the first half of the 5th century BC,⁶⁶ but it is certainly a reflection of an iconographic type and theme established in Anatolian and later Persian art. A similar, even if simplified arrangement is known for instance from the gold and silver *croeseids* dated to mid-6th century BC (SNG Copenhagen 456): the *croeseids* show the animals facing each other but the way the lion attacks the bull is reminiscent of the later and better arranged composition.

Also the *protomes* of the animals represented on two separate coins of this series resemble the arrangement of the fight as it is known from the Apadana, and also from the *croeseids*, where they appear together. Given that Akanthos was an important base of the Persian presence in the area,⁶⁷ it is very likely that the image on its coins was influenced by eastern models.⁶⁸

4 Conclusion

The appearance of some of these elements in the Thraco-Macedonian area around the time of the Persian conquest could be probably interpreted within the frame proposed by Maria Brosius in the discussion concerning the Achaemenid impact on Thrace:

“The ideological inclusion into the Empire ... could not succeed merely by maintaining the cultural identity of the peoples, or by representing them officially as equal lands. Something more needed to be offered in order to ensure their co-operation. The idea of *pax persica* could not function with a strict separation between the Persian ruling class and the subject peoples. It required – to an extent and at a certain level – the integration of the local elite into the political apparatus, as local officials and administrator. ... It included the exchange of gifts fashioned in Achaemenid court art, while mixed marriages between members of the Persian and local elite aided the incorporation of the latter into the Persian ‘machinery’. The example of Amyntas of Macedon giving his daughter Gygea in marriage to Bubares, son of

66 According to the foundation deposit coins chronology the foundation is dated to ca. 500 BC (J. CURTIS AND S. RAZMJOU, “The Palace”, in: J. Curtis and N. Tallis (eds.), *Forgotten Empire: The World of Ancient Persia*, London 2005, 58, with bibliography), but the same authors (p. 79) suggest that the staircase reliefs including the lion and bull panels could be added during the reign of Artaxerxes III, i.e. in the mid-4th century. Still, given the stylistic and ideological conservatism of Achaemenid art, the dating of the Apadana reliefs is not decisive here, as they must reflect the type established earlier (cf. references in n. 64).

67 Hdt. VI 44; D.S. XI 5; Str. VII fr. 35.

68 M. TAČEVA, “On the Problems of the Coinages of Alexander I, Sparadokos and the So-Called Thracian-Macedonian Tribes”, *Historia* 41 (1992), 65, suggests the Euboean coins as a possible model for the Akanthos types but their style and arrangement is different.

Megabazos, is a good example of this practice occurring at the earliest date after the inclusion of a client-kingdom into the Persian Empire. ... The ‘successful integration’ of the local elite into the Persian ideology may also be grasped in the adoption of Persian values ... expressed in the depiction of activities such as banqueting and hunting on a variety of media.”⁶⁹

On the one hand this analysis allows for an interpretation of the numerous banquet and hunting scenes or paraphernalia in the royal/aristocratic burials and on coins before Alexander, as well as for the development of monumental architecture; on the other hand, however, it also may serve for the interpretation of Alexander’s actions during the eastern campaign. Moreover, it can also explain to some extent the formation processes of the Hellenistic kingdoms. Alexander, and consequently his Successors, employed the same mechanisms of integration; in Alexander’s case, however, the “direction” and abruptness of the movement produced certain level of discontent among the Macedonians, a mistake that the Successors had not repeated. Still, for instance the Perso-Macedonian mass wedding may be interpreted as exactly the imitation of the Persian – and Macedonian – policy of integration.

This approach allows also to correct what John Boardman wrote about the royal lion hunt: that “the subject is taken up in the Macedonian period perhaps even before Alexander had learnt eastern ways”.⁷⁰ Possibly Alexander did not need to learn the eastern ways to the extent that we tend to imagine; possibly the theme of the mounted lion hunt had been known to him from a tradition of his own country, not necessarily from the practice of such hunt (the presence or absence of actual lions in Macedonia is another bone of academic contention), but from the royal imagery brought to the area by the Persians of Darius the Great.

If in the course of the 5th century BC Macedonia developed a unique combination of Persian and Hellenic influences, a highly eclectic and yet original culture, not only in arts but also in political and social systems, then in the 4th century BC great Macedonian kings may have been immersed in the Persian traditions, without even being fully aware of that heritage while planning the conquest of the East. Therefore when Alexander defeated the Achaemenids he had not needed to adopt their customs entirely, because he may have had a number of them ingrained in his education and Macedonian background. The change of garb or the attempt at introduction of court customs was just a superficial thing which has been probably blown out of proportion by both the ancient and modern historians. Keeping in mind Persian influence on Macedonia may help to interpret those controversial moves of Alexander in the East.

69 BROSIUS, “Pax” (n. 15), 33–34.

70 J. BOARDMAN, *Persia and the West: An Archaeological Investigation of the Genesis of Achaemenid Art*, London 2000, 213.

The King and His Personal Historian: The Relationship between Alexander of Macedon and Callisthenes in Bactria and Sogdiana

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1 The Preliminaries: The so called “Plot of Philotas”, Alexander’s Banquet, the Murdering of Cleitus, and the conspiracy of the “Royal Children”

This communication of mine held at the International Conference “Alexander the Great and the East: History, Art, Tradition” by the University of Wrocław in collaboration with the University of Hamburg is a further development of my study entitled “Alexander’s Banquet and the Cases of Cleitus and Callisthenes” that I have published in Bucharest in the years 2005-2006 in the *Annals of the Sergiu Al George Institute*, IX–X (2000–2002) (this publication of the former Romanian Sergiu Al-George Institute for Oriental Studies appeared always in retard, due to organizational and financial problems). I have refined the study (although I have kept its original structure with some corrections) and added some conclusions that were not presented in the article published in Bucharest. These conclusions pertain to the fate of the “History of Alexander” written by Callisthenes of Olynthus and to the influence exerted by this contemporary history of the Macedonian hero and warrior king on the subsequent histories of Alexander of Macedon.

The years 329–327 BC represented a crucial period in the history of Alexander’s Empire. The guerrilla war fought by the Macedonians was accompanied by a political crisis, involving the higher echelons of the army and royal court. The stakes were high, and the Macedonian idea of royalty was challenged by no other than Alexander himself. After the decisive defeat of the Persian army commanded by Darius III at Gaugamela, in the early autumn of 331 BC, and the conquest of the imperial capital cities of Babylon, Susa, Persepolis, Pasargadae, and Ecbatana, then almost immediately followed the murder of Darius at Hecatompylos (near Shahrud in Northern Iran). Between late 331 BC and the summer of 330 BC, Alexander the Great had to contend with the resistance movement led by Bessus, the satrap of Bactria and the murderer of the last rightful Achaemenid king, Darius III. This situation caused the Macedonian king to wage war in the eastern parts of the former Achaemenid Empire. Bessus claimed the royal title and assumed the upright tiara, the royal headdress (κίθαρις/κίταρις) of the Persian kings. He also took the royal Achaemenid name of Artaxerxes V (Arr. *An.* III 25.3). This was a direct challenge to Alexander’s claims to the Persian kingship.

During the campaigns in the second half of 330 BC and the first part of 329 BC appeared the first signs of change in the nature of the Macedonian monarchy. The conspiracy at Phraada (Προφθασία in Arachosia and Drangiana), where Philotas, the commander of Alexander’s Companion Cavalry (ἱππεῖς ἑτάῃροι), and his father, the elderly Macedonian general Parmenio, who remained behind at Ecbatana, have fallen into royal disgrace and

were eventually killed, was a clear sign of things to come.¹ Philotas, being put under torture to reveal his alleged part in the plot, was executed after a military trial, and Parmenio was assassinated at Ecbatana under direct royal orders. These political murders cleared the way for implementing a new policy. By eliminating Parmenio and his last surviving son, Philotas (the other two sons of Parmenio, Hector and Nicanor, had died during the campaign, before these events have occurred), Alexander opened a new path for changing the very essence of his monarchy. The war against Bessus, the usurper of Darius' throne, was finally over, and a council of Persian noblemen, including Oxathres, Darius' brother, judged the assassin of the last Achaemenid king and proclaimed Bessus guilty of high treason. He (Bessus) was sentenced to death and executed in the Persian style (D.S. XVII 83.7–9; Arr. *An.* IV 7.3–5). This proved not to be the end, because open armed rebellion broke out in Areia and Drangiana, and then in Arachosia under the leadership of Satibarzanes, and also almost simultaneously in Bactria-Sogdiana under the command of a brilliant warlord and guerrilla expert, Spitamenes. The former was alongside with Bessus and Nabarzanes one of Darius' murderers, and the latter betrayed Bessus to Alexander, only to rebel later against the Macedonian king. This was the situation in Eastern Iran and Southern Central Asia in the year 329 BC.

Alexander deployed his forces with the intent of crushing this rebellion at once, but what followed was a guerrilla war (in fact a quick succession of several insurrections) which lasted for three years, during the period 329–327 BC. The conflict area was huge, including the Upper Satrapies (Parthia, Margiana, Areia and Drangiana, Arachosia, Paropamisadae, and Bactria and Sogdiana). This space corresponds to Northern, Central, and Eastern Iran, and the southern parts of Central Asia (nowadays most of Turkmenistan, Uzbekistan, Tajikistan, the southern frontier regions of Kazakhstan and Kyrgyzstan, and of course the whole of today's Afghanistan plus the North-western tribal zones of Pakistan). The Macedonian troops, under the direct command of their king and of his most trusted high-ranking officers, crossed the Hindu Kush (the Caucasus and Paropamissus Mountains), the Oxus (Amu-Darya), and the Tanais and Jaxartes (the Syr Darya). Alexander's soldiers fought against the terrible climate, the difficult terrain, and the valiant warriors of North-eastern Iran and Central Asia. These were the warlike horsemen known to the Greeks, and later to the Romans, as the Bactrian, the Sogdiana, and the Sacae (Sakā) (Massagetae, Dahae (Daae), Parni, and Scythians. Sakā appeared to be the Sanskrit and Ancient Persian term for the nomadic populations from Central Asia to Eastern Europe; in Alexander's time most of these peoples, if not all of them, seemed to be Iranian speaking tribes. In the same period the Macedonian king assumed *regalia* (royal clothes and insignia) borrowed from the practice of the Achaemenid royal court.² Moreover, Alexander accepted in his entourage Iranian noblemen, integrating them into the ranks of his ἐταῖροι and courtiers. Naturally enough, the Macedonian aristocrats were not at all pleased, because they saw

1 D.S. XVII 79.1–6; Curt. VI 7–11 and VII 1–2. Arr. *An.* III 26–27 is based, as usual, on Ptolemy and Aristobulus. D.S. XVII 79–80 (especially D.S. XVII 80.1–4) speaks about those Macedonian soldiers who protested and grumbled after the killings of Philotas and Parmenio, and were gathered into a special unit, named ἀτάκτων τάγμα (the “battalion of the undisciplined”). For these occurrences see also Curt. VII 2.35–38.

2 Plu. *Alex.* 45; vide Arr. *An.* IV 7.3–5 for the execution of Bessus and the pro-Oriental policy of Alexander.

some of the vanquished enemies becoming the trustees of their Macedonian king. The Persian aristocrats in Alexander's entourage were then only a few, but it was a bad omen for things to come. At least, this was the perception of many Macedonian nobles, if we choose to rely on the written sources available.

In the late summer or early autumn of 328 BC, at Maracanda (Samarkand), the smoldering enmities exploded.³ The scene of this confrontation was a royal banquet. Alexander gathered his friends, both Macedonians (and Greeks) as well as Iranians, at a banquet in the usual Macedonian way, with heavy drinking, jokes, and boasting as the main entertainment. It seemed that Alexander had already formed an inner circle of close friends and collaborators: young Macedonian commanders, Iranian nobles, and Greek flatterers, mainly sophists and court-poets. This was Alexander's faction, a group opposed to the old Macedonian guard. Among the members of this old guard were the elderly Macedonian commanders, who served first under Philip II, and then under his son and heir, Alexander. The Black Cleitus (son of Dropides or of Dropidas), who was then one of the Companion Cavalry's commanders, and before having that military command he had saved Alexander's life at Granicus, was among them. *In vino veritas*: Cleitus voiced the opinion of many Macedonian noblemen and that brought about his killing by Alexander's hand; Cleitus had personally saved Alexander's life in the thick of the battle at Granicus, by killing a Persian warrior who attacked Alexander on his rear. Cleitus' achievements in the fight of Granicus and during all the campaigns of the war could not protect him against the anger of his king; but saying that Alexander was very drunk and angry when he killed Cleitus does not explain the outcome.

The first thing to be pointed out, prior to the banquet where Alexander's rage broke loose, is the inexplicable decision of transferring to Castor and Pollux the sacrifice dedicated to Dionysus. During the feast, the king himself and his flatterers kept saying that Alexander's deeds were surpassing the exploits of the Dioscuri, and even the glorious achievements of Heracles. Alexander's flatterers (κόλακες) were persistent in eulogizing the king. They even diminished the famous deeds and merits of Philip and Parmenio, and even worse, the king was on their side. Cleitus, who was already drunk, protested, and said that the victory over the Persians was the common work of all the Macedonian warriors, and not Alexander's victory alone. He also added that it was a sacrilege to belittle the exploits of the heroes of old only to enhance the king's deeds and valour. Cleitus' protest was initially discrete (he spoke to his fellow neighbors at the table), but some guests sang a song that was in fact a poem composed by the poet Pranichus or Pierio. This was a deliberate provocation, because the song made fun of the defeated Macedonians in a fight against the barbarian rebels. It was most probably a satiric poem, inspired by the massacre of a Macedonian detachment commanded by Menedemus (it was 2000 foot soldiers and 300 horsemen strong). This Macedonian task force was put to the sword by Spitamenes' rebels and their Dahae allies.⁴ The same author narrated also another Macedonian defeat; the destruc-

3 A.B. BOSWORTH, "Alexander and the Iranians", *JHS* 100 (1980), 1–21 and A.B. BOSWORTH, "A Missing Year in the History of Alexander the Great", *JHS* 101 (1981), 17–39; A.B. BOSWORTH, *Alessandro Magno L'Uomo e Il Suo Impero*, Milan 2004, 160–163 and 385–386.

4 Curt. VII 7.30–39 and VII 9.20–22; Plu. *Alex.* 50; Arr. *An.* IV 5–6 mentions a multiple military command of this detachment, a situation that had finally led to disaster. Formally, the overall commander of

tion of 300 Macedonian horsemen led by Attinas, who were ambushed by the Bactrian and Massagetae insurgents.⁵ In the end, after a furious debate between Cleitus and Alexander, and after the futile interventions of the king's friends, anxious to save Cleitus' life, Alexander seized a spear from one of his guards (there were armed soldiers at the banquet for security reasons), and pierced Cleitus, killing him on the spot. This was the murdering of Cleitus, and the king's guards were unable to restrain Alexander's fury, although they tried.⁶

The banquet, which began in Macedonian style, ended in blood and murder. In this violent dispute what was really at stake was not self-evident. Cleitus only expressed what others thought and dared not speak. Macedonian help and assistance was essential to both Philip and Alexander; the only difference was that Philip recognized this fact of life, and Alexander did not. Cleitus' diatribe was political, and power was the name of the game Alexander played. The political expression of royal power itself was at stake, and the clash between Cleitus and his king was the conflict of two cultures of political power, so to speak, not only the fight between two drunkards. Cleitus defended the traditional Macedonian conception of royalty, which allowed easy access to the king and freedom of speech in his presence; Alexander already looked forward to the absolute monarchy, at least partially inspired by the Achaemenids and by the Pharaohs of Egypt. The Macedonian kingship was a monarchy whose power was limited by the aristocracy and the army (*i.e.* the Macedonian people represented by the free men bearing arms); Alexander's new monarchy had to be different.⁷

The bitter irony of the whole affair was that Cleitus would become the satrap of Bactria-Sogdiana, the banquet was probably given in his honour, but his own king killed him. According to Plutarch (*Alex.* 50–51), the event was preceded by portents; the king, receiving some Greek fruits, called Cleitus to share those gifts. Cleitus was then sacrificing to the gods, but he left his sacrifice unfinished, and three of the sacrificial animals followed him to the king. Alexander consulted his seers, Aristander of Telmessus and Cleomantis/Cleomenes of Sparta, and they told him it was a bad omen. The king then ordered an expiatory sacrifice to purify Cleitus. The third day after, Alexander dreamed of Cleitus,

the Macedonian task force was the Persian Pharnuches (directly appointed in this position by Alexander), but in fact he was forced by his lack of military experience to share command with three experienced Macedonian officers: Menedemus, Andromachus, and Caranus. Because Pharnuches had realized too late that he must give up his command to the Macedonian trio of commanders, the events accelerated in a direction unfavorable to the Macedonian battle group. He eventually gave up the command to the three Macedonians, who refuted it, because they feared to disobey Alexander's direct orders. This disagreement and confusion brought disaster, because during their quarrels Spitamenes' horsemen were upon them. Arrian's source here appears to have been Aristobulus: the cavalry of Bactrians, Sogdians, and Scythians (Sakā, Dahae, Massagetae) massacred there almost all of the Macedonian warriors; only some forty Macedonian horsemen and about three hundred Macedonian foot soldiers had escaped there with their lives (from approximately 2000 infantry and 300 cavalry) *vide* Arr. *An.* IV 6.2. *Vide* P. GREEN, *Alexander of Macedon 356–323 BC: A Historical Biography*, Berkeley/Los Angeles/Oxford 1991, 357–359 for Alexander's Central Asian campaigns.

5 Curt. VIII 1.3–5; this incident is not mentioned by Arrian.

6 Arr. *An.* IV 8.7; for the killing of Cleitus see Arr. *An.* IV 8; Plu. *Alex.* 50–51; Curt. VIII 1.19–52.

7 P. GOUKOWSKY, *Essai sur les origines du mythe d'Alexandre* (336–270 av. J.–C.), I: *Les Origines Politiques*, Nancy 1978, 45–47 and 67; GREEN, *Alexander* (n. 4), 360–364.

standing alongside the three sons of Parmenio (who were all three dead at that moment), and all four (Philotas, Hector, Nicanor, and Cleitus, the only one still alive from this group) were dressed in black. This can be seen as a mitigation of Alexander's guilt, the murder was thought of as a preordained event, a fact which belonged to the domain of Destiny or of Cleitus' Fate, and was not an ethical or judicial responsibility of the king. Curtius (VIII 19–52, esp. 43–52) describes the banquet and the killing of Cleitus; although firstly Alexander and Cleitus were both portrayed as guilty (they were both drunk, Alexander indulged in a self-eulogy, Cleitus protested, was expelled from the banquet hall, and then returned), Curtius explicitly blames Alexander, who is portrayed stalking Cleitus and killing him after the banquet. This perspective on Alexander's crime is dependent on Roman aristocratic (senatorial) values. In fact, this was the Roman idea of a corrupting, pernicious East that led to the degeneration of Alexander's monarchy, and could cause, *ipso facto*, the decline and ultimate ruin of the Roman Empire. The influence of Asia determined in this Roman perspective of things the decay of the Macedonian royalty and customs. In fact, the Roman historians of the first century AD, reflecting the political opinions of the Roman aristocracy (especially those of the *Ordo Senatorius*), were speaking of their own world. A Roman emperor, who was more than a *Princeps Senatus* and an *Imperator*, was dangerous for the Republican fiction of *libertas* and for the Roman nobility as well. Alexander, who wanted to be more than a simple Macedonian king, curtailed by laws and customs (written or unwritten), a monarch who was bound to respect the rights of the Macedonian people and the aristocratic privileges, strove for an empire built alongside Eastern principles. Therefore he was a perfect model of royal degeneration to the Roman historians. The pro-republican historical view is a cultural fact for many cultivated Romans during the Roman Empire.⁸

Plutarch (*Alex.* 52), Curtius (VIII 2.1–12), and Arrian (*An.* IV 9) described Alexander's moral and psychological crisis. According to Plutarch, the king's friends brought in to comfort Alexander the sophist Anaxarchus of Abdera, and Callisthenes of Olynthus, who was then the official court historian and Alexander's ἐπιστολογράφος. Before that, the seer Aristander of Telmessus tried to solace the king, reminding him the dream about Cleitus and the sons of Parmenio. This detail could be royal propaganda, destined to exonerate Alexander of any moral guilt in this manslaughter. Nevertheless, this episode is very consistent with the mentality of the Ancients, so it can be true. Apparently, Callisthenes was not very successful in comforting Alexander, but Anaxarchus, with his cynical remarks – that Zeus, the king of the gods, was accompanied by the goddesses of Justice, Δίκη and Θέμις, succeeded. Alexander, who became king of men, should consider himself the earthly counterpart of the king of Olympus, and so above the human law. Moreover, Alexander should think of himself as the source of law and justice on Earth. By doing this, Anaxarchus pushed Alexander on a very dangerous road, which finally led to a new form of Oriental despotism. In the end, whether Alexander's boasting at the banquet was a deliberate provocation, planned by Alexander to test the hearts and minds of his Companions, or the violent result of heavy drinking and Macedonian toughness, the end-result was the same: the murdering of Cleitus.⁹

8 P. CEAUȘESCU, "La double image d'Alexandre le Grand à Rome", *StudClas* 16 (1974), 153–168.

9 GOUKOWSKY, *Essai* (n. 7), 45–47; GREEN, *Alexander* (n. 4), 361–366; the rank and file Macedonians were indifferent, and only Alexander's reaction gave Cleitus a proper burial (Curt. VIII 2.11–12). For

1.2 *The προσκύνησις affair and the attitude of Callisthenes*

In the years 328–327 BC, Alexander's political actions were dominated by the problem of pacifying and ruling the conquered territories. Although naturally the king trusted more his Macedonian and Greek followers, he did not have enough trained personnel to man the administration and the army of the new conquered territories in Central-Eastern Iran and in the southern parts of Central Asia. Even Alexander's marriage with the Bactrian princess Rhoxane, daughter of the dynast Oxyarthes/Oxyartes, can be regarded as a political alliance between King Alexander and the Iranian nobility of Bactria. The German historians named this policy of Alexander *Asiatierungspolitik*, *Verschmelzungspolitik*, or, more appropriately, *Versöhnungswerk*.¹⁰ Alexander prepared his Indian expedition and Iranian cavalry units (Bactriani, Sogdiani, Dahae, etc.) appeared integrated in the Macedonian army. In that context, one can see the προσκύνησις affair as an attempt of Alexander to win over the complete loyalty of all his subjects, Macedonians, Greeks, and Iranians alike.¹¹

In the Achaemenian Empire, when a visitor saw the Great King, whether he was a subject or a foreign ambassador, it was compulsory for him to prostrate before the throne of the King of kings (Old Persian *xšāyaθiyānām Xšāyaθiya*, βασιλεὺς βασιλέων for the Greeks). He knelt down, bowed to the ground, and put his right hand to the mouth, thus worshipping the Persian king.

The Greeks considered that the Great King, being a man, could not be honoured with a worship gesture fit for a God. The *Hellenes* (Macedonians and Greeks alike) could not believe that a human being was worshipped in this way, and subsequently they thought the Great King was venerated as a God by his subjects; or rather the Greeks thought that the Persian "King of kings" was truly a living God for his subjects. Needless to say that for both Macedonians and Greeks the Great King was a man and nothing but a very powerful man. Of course, he was indeed a very rich and powerful barbarian ruler. This was not the case of the Oriental perception of kingship. The Egyptian Pharaohs were really living gods in the eyes of their subjects, but the Achaemenid kings were only men hallowed with a sacred aura, named *Khvarenah/Xvarenah* (or *Hvarena/Hvareno*) in the ancient Iranian languages.¹² Nevertheless, since the Great Persian King was selected by the Iranian Supreme God, *Ahura-Mazdā*, from the Aryan (*i.e.* Iranian) and Persian clan of the Achaemenids, he was more than an ordinary human being. The Greeks even believed that the king's soul was divine for the Persians, the royal soul being for them a δαίμων, a spiritual superhuman

the *proskynesis* ritual *vide* R. LANE FOX, *Alexander the Great*, London 2004, 320–321, for the differences between the Greek practice of *proskynesis* before the statues of the gods and the Persian custom of *proskynesis* before the "King of kings" (slightly bending the head, neck, and body and kissing the royal hand or, in case of royal disgrace and in the hope of regaining the favour of the Persian Great King, prostrating himself before the "King of kings"). For the whole *proskynesis* affair and Callisthenes' attitude towards it, *vide* LANE FOX, *Alexander* (n. 9), 322–330.

10 BOSWORTH, "Missing" (n. 3), 30–31, 33–34, 36; BOSWORTH, "Alexander" (n. 3), 1–3, 10, 17–18; *vide* A.B. BOSWORTH "Alexander and the Iranians", in: I. Worthington (ed.), *Alexander the Great: A Reader*, London/ New York 2003, 208 and 216

11 GOUKOWSKY, *Essai* (n. 7), 47; GREEN, *Alexander* (n. 4), 372–373.

12 S.K. EDDY, *The King is Dead: Studies in the Near Eastern Resistance to Hellenism, 334–31 B.C.*, Lincoln 1961, 41–47; GOUKOWSKY, *Essai* (n. 7), 47.

entity. There actually was a Persian cult, a veneration, or anyway a form of worship of the king's *fravashi*, his august soul.¹³

The Greek ambassadors and envoys at the Achaemenid royal court were embarrassed by the προσκύνησις element of the Persian royal etiquette, during the time of the Achaemenid Persian rule over Asia. Alexander's dilemma was clear and simple enough: either the same law and royal protocol for all his subjects, regardless of their ethnic and cultural identity, or one law for the Europeans and another for his new Oriental subjects. The Macedonian king knew well that the introduction of προσκύνησις would cause a negative reaction of his Macedonians and Greeks. Therefore Alexander devised a plan, initially known only by himself, by Anaxarchus, and by a small group of Greek intellectuals. There are two main variants of the same episode, one of them stemming from Chares of Mytilene, Alexander's chamberlain, and the other from Cleitarchus, Ptolemy (Ptolemaeus son of Lagus), and Aristobulus. These variants might be two successive episodes of the same event, and not two different stories of the same episode.¹⁴

However, Alexander had a problem with his double status as King of the Macedonians (Βασιλεὺς τῶν Μακεδόνων) and king of Asia (including Egypt), βασιλεὺς τῆς Ἀσίας. The Iranian aristocrats, if they were the only noblemen who performed the προσκύνησις, could feel lesser men than their Macedonian counterparts and the Greek followers at the itinerant court of the new King of Asia, Alexander. Their loyalty towards him, already weak for many of them, and even very thin in some cases, could grow even thinner. The last thing Alexander ever wanted in the eve of his Indian campaign was a new insurrection or armed revolt behind his army, on his lines of communications. He painfully crushed the Bactrian-Sogdian rebellions in a blood bath after a three years guerrilla war and he had enough of it.

The first variant of this story portrays an Alexander deeply influenced by his Greek followers and flatterers (sophists and court-poets like Anaxarchus of Abdera and Agis of Argos), and who took council from his Median and Persian nobles (Arr. *An.* IV 9.7–9 and *An.* IV 10.5–7). Curtius gives us a slightly different picture of the same tale. He writes about the προσκύνησις affair (Curt. VIII 5.5–24) and the opposition of Callisthenes to the deification of Alexander during his lifetime. Curtius (VIII 5.21) mentions also the role played in this political affair by Alexander's Greek flatterers, Agis of Argos and Cleon the Sicilian. One can see that the people involved in the new politics at Alexander's court have not always the same names, a fact reflecting different traditions about Alexander's reign: Ptolemy (Ptolemaeus the son of Lagus) and Aristobulus for Arrian, Cleitarchus for Q. Curtius Rufus. Alexander's wrath against a Macedonian ἑταῖροι, who laughed when an old Persian nobleman performed προσκύνησις in front of the king, appears in both Arrian and Q. Curtius Rufus, but in Arrian (*An.* IV 12.1–2) the ἑταῖρος' name was Leonnatus, and in Curtius (VIII 5.22–24) was Polyperchon. Both of them are known figures in Alexander's army and court, so the difference can be explained by different basic sources for Arrian, and respectively Q. Curtius Rufus, at least for this incident. Arrian, Q. Curtius Rufus, and Plutarch are our main sources of information about these events. Justin (XII 3–7) is a poorer information source on Alexander's Middle Eastern tendencies and the killings of Philotas, Parmenio, Cleitus, and Callisthenes, but this fact is due mainly to the general

13 EDDY, *King* (n. 12), 43–44.

14 GOUKOWSKY, *Essai* (n. 7), 47.

aspect of Iustinus' style, who was above all a writer of historical *epitomae*. Trogus Pompeius appears to be a Roman historian whose image of Alexander the Great is akin to that of Q. Curtius Rufus', because of the Roman historical perspective on the subject.

However, both Arrian and Q. Curtius Rufus described the banquet hall as the stage of politics at Alexander's court. Arrian drew the picture of a Callisthenes who had an austere life-style and who did not like Alexander's pro-Iranian policy. On the other hand, Arrian's main sources suggested that Callisthenes claimed that his writing made Alexander immortal, neither the king's alleged miraculous birth (which was his mother Olympias' lie), nor Alexander's heroic deeds. Callisthenes even supposedly fueled the older conflict between Philotas and Alexander, by defending the idea of tyrannicide, a clear hint to Alexander's new monarchy (Arr. *An.* IV 10.1–4). In contrast, Arrian describes Anaxarchus and the Iranian aristocrats close to Alexander as favourable to the ritual of προσκύνησις. Anaxarchus even told that Alexander deserved more than Heracles and Dionysus the status of a god, due to his legendary exploits. The Persian and Median nobles around Alexander connived with him and the Greek sophists to discuss the problem of Alexander's deification (Arr. *An.* IV 10.5–7). Just before the Indian expedition, Q. Curtius Rufus (VIII 5.7–8 and VIII 5.21) brings in the episode in which Cleon, at a banquet, along with another Ἀλεξανδροκόλαξ, the poet Agis of Argos, gave a speech advocating the deification of Alexander, claiming as arguments the Persian practice concerning kingship and the blessings of Alexander's reign. Callisthenes pronounced a counter-speech, giving as examples Heracles and Bacchus (Dionysus), deified after their death. Arrian (*An.* IV 11.1–9) gave us the speech pronounced by Callisthenes and addressed to Anaxarchus, who in Arrian's variant of this episode (*An.* IV 10.5–7) has played the part of Cleon from Q. Curtius Rufus (VIII 5.21). The essential ideas of Callisthenes and his arguments are the same in the narratives of Arrian and of Q. Curtius Rufus. Callisthenes appeared as an intelligent defender of his own opinions, demolishing the arguments of Anaxarchus (or Cleon, in Curtius' tale), but underlining Alexander's glory. Interesting enough, some of Callisthenes' best arguments were drawn directly from Greek religious practice (the difference between the cultic forms dedicated to heroes, and respectively to Olympian gods, and the fact that only an oracle could declare *post mortem* that a mortal has become a hero or a god; *vide* Arr. *An.* IV 11.2–8, esp. IV 11.3). These arguments were hard to swallow by Alexander and his κόλακες. Alexander's partisans knew too well the king's ambitions since the pilgrimage to the oracle of Zeus-Ammon at Siwah. Callisthenes' point of view was silently approved by many a Macedonian (Arr. *An.* IV 12.1). Q. Curtius Rufus (VIII 5.20) named Callisthenes as being *vindex publicae libertatis*, as he was probably seen then by many Macedonians. The claiming of Persian precedents by Cleon/Anaxarchus was countered by Callisthenes, who showed the dire fate or the defeats suffered by Cyrus II the Great, Xerxes, Artaxerxes (the Persian king mentioned by Xenophon's *Anabasis*), and ultimately by Darius III (Arr. *An.* IV 11.9). Both accounts (Curtius' and Arrian's) had similar subjects: Alexander, according to the plan, must leave the banquet-hall at a specific moment, and in his absence a speaker would pronounce a speech. The main idea of this speech was the divine honours Alexander was entitled to receive from Persians (Iranians and Orientals generally speaking) and Greeks (including the Macedonians) alike. The spokesman is Anaxarchus in Arrian's account, Cleon in Curtius'. After the speeches of Anaxarchus/Cleon and Callisthenes, Alexander, who had been all the time hidden behind a curtain and heard all, came back into the banquet-hall. He knew that

Callisthenes was right and had won the debate. The king could not impose the προσκύνησις to the Macedonians and Greeks in Asia, and then to those in Europe. In this case Alexander renounced to impose his will on Macedonians and Greeks. He had lost an ideological battle, and he was not the man who could bear a defeat for long.¹⁵

Plutarch offers a different story, in fact a variant of the same tale. In his account we find neither Alexander's fake withdrawal from the banquet-hall, or his surprise-coming back. Plutarch's account is based on Chares' narrative. In this episode belonging to the tradition stemming from Chares of Mytilene, Alexander and Hephaestion (probably already χλῖαρχος, an office similar for many historians to that of a grand vizier, for others only a military command over 1000 horsemen) had invited many guests at a banquet, among others Callisthenes. Alexander, taking a cup or a drinking-bowl (φιάλη), gave it to a friend, who, receiving it and standing up towards the shrine or altar of the room (the sacred hearth, ἐστία), drank it, and then performed προσκύνησις, kissed Alexander, and finally he sat back on the couch (κλίνη). All the guests sitting in the room, except Callisthenes, performed this sequence of ritual gestures. He only took the drinking-bowl, drank it, and went to kiss Alexander, without performing the προσκύνησις. A ἐταῖρος, Demetrius son of Pythonax, nicknamed Pheido, remarked that Callisthenes did not perform προσκύνησις. Alexander refused to kiss him, and Callisthenes retreated, as he said, "poorer by a kiss" (Plu. *Alex.* 54; Arr. *An.* IV 12.3–5). These different accounts could be variants of the same episode, or rather successive different episodes of the same story.¹⁶

There is another tale narrated by Plutarch (*Alex.* 53), where Callisthenes is described as too ostentatious, austere, haughty, but dignified. The youngest and the oldest of the Macedonians, who were the most dedicated and loyal to Macedonian traditions, because he had the courage of his own opinions, loved him. Callisthenes' enemies at Alexander's court were the sophists and royal flatterers, known as the Ἀλεξανδροκόλακες. He was reluctant to accept invitations at the royal συμπόσια, or, when he accepted, he remained austere, silent, almost tacitly disapproving what was going on at a drinking-party. This behavior did not endear him, and even Alexander had said, quoting his favorite dramatic poet, Euripides: "A sage who is blind to his own interests"; the quotation was from an unknown play of Euripides, the king clearly referring to Callisthenes. Therefore Alexander set a psychological trap for Callisthenes, in order to cut off his popularity among Macedonians. In fact, he invited Callisthenes, at a Macedonian συμπόσιον, first of all to praise the Macedonians. The historian acquitted himself very well of this task, the Macedonians were well pleased; then, because "On noble subjects all men can speak well" (Alexander's quotation from Euripides' *Bacchae*, verse 260), the king asked his historian to show them their faults and vices, to improve themselves. Alexander aimed not to correct his Macedonians, but he defied Callisthenes' ability at heuristics and polemics. His pride and overconfidence in his own dialectic skills made the historian to accept the challenge. As a philosopher, Callisthenes showed too well the Macedonian vices, and the Macedonian commanders were outraged. Especially his allegation, aiming at Philip and the Macedonian veterans (Callisthenes' own supporters, but also the victors at Chaeronea) that "Once civil strife has begun, even scoun-

15 GOUKOWSKY, *Essai* (n. 7), 47–48 ; vide Arr. *An.* IV 12.2 and Curt. VIII 5.22–24 for Alexander's wrath against Leonnatus or Polyperchon.

16 GOUKOWSKY, *Essai* (n. 7), 48–49.

drels may find themselves honored”, infuriated the Macedonians. His outright speech presented Philip’s victory over the Greek city-states as due mainly to Greek disunity, not to Macedonian valour (an affirmation at least partially true). This made the Macedonian *ἐταῖροι* grumble and they began to hate him. Even Alexander, obviously pleased by this result, said that Callisthenes showed the Macedonians not his rhetoric talent, but his deep hatred against them (Plu. *Alex.* 53).¹⁷

Another interesting episode was also mentioned by Plutarch (*Alex.* 54.1), quoting a rather obscure author, Hermippus, who in his turn wrote that Stroeus, the slave who read for Callisthenes, told these things to Aristotle. Apparently Callisthenes realized too late that he has fallen into royal disgrace, and when he left the king, repeated twice or thrice; “Braver by far than you was Patrocles, but death did not spare him” (*Il.* XXI 107, the verse where Achilles said these to Hector). Aristotle, hearing this tale, remarked that Callisthenes was not very astute, although he was learned and well read: “λόγῳ μὲν δυνατῷ, ...νοῦν δὲ οὐκ ἔχειν” (Plu. *Alex.* 54.2). One cannot say if Callisthenes in a deliberate way defied the king, or he foretold his own doom, or both.

Whatever the case, Callisthenes’s attitude was a symptom of many struggles at Alexander’s court: the conflict between the old Macedonian idea of monarchy and Alexander’s new βασιλεία, inspired by the East; the confrontation between Philip’s old Macedonian guard and Alexander’s new *ἐταῖροι*, which was more than a conflict between veterans and young gentlemen at arms. It was the struggle for power and preeminence between the elder men of Alexander’s staff, devoted to the old Macedonian traditions of aristocratic freedom, and the new power group created by Alexander himself, and formed out of young Macedonian commanders, Iranian nobility, Greek intellectuals and court-flatterers. To put it shortly, it was the rise of a new military aristocracy, a new court, and a new élite for a new empire.

For a better understanding of Callisthenes’ position at court and of his courageous attitude, to say the least, one must study his motivations and his career, or rather his background as an itinerant scholar, who was willy-nilly involved in politics because of his employment as a court-historian and a private secretary to the king (*ἐπιστολογράφος*). Being in charge with Alexander’s letters meant that Callisthenes enjoyed the trust of his king, and another argument is his position as the official historian of Alexander’s expedition and the king’s biographer. Callisthenes was also Aristotle’s nephew (he was the son of Hero, a lady who was Aristotle’s relative), and as a historian and *ἐπιστολογράφος* he was probably the colleague or subordinate of Eumenes of Cardia, Alexander’s *ἀρχιγραμματεὺς* (the chief of the royal chancellery). Diodorus of Erythreia, who alongside Eumenes was in charge of the journal of Alexander’s expedition (the *Ἐφημερίδες*), and Chares of Mytilene, who was the king’s spokesman (*εἰσαγγελεύς*) during Alexander’s campaign, were probably also close colleagues of Callisthenes.

Aristotle, who as a philosopher and traveling scholar (due to his exile from Athens, after Plato’s death), was a man of the world, involved in the politics of the day. He went from the court of Hermeias of Atarneus in Asia Minor to Assos, and then to Mytilene in Lesbos. Finally, probably in 343 BC he was invited by King Philip II of Macedon to be tutor and

17 Plu. *Alex.* 53.3; GREEN, *Alexander* (n. 4), 377 considers this verse to be from Euripides’ *Bacchae*, verse 266 ff.

teacher of his son, the young prince Alexander, and of a few Macedonian noble youths of Alexander's generation. He accepted. Callisthenes followed Aristotle to Macedon, to the school at Mieza, where they taught science and philosophy to Prince Alexander and his colleagues, who later became commanders and high-ranking officers and officials in Alexander's army and royal court. So Callisthenes knew Alexander from his teenage years as a pupil at Mieza, and later, when he became court-historian of Alexander, he knew what to expect from him. Callisthenes was older than Alexander; possibly he was an assistant professor of Aristotle himself (or at least the senior of the class) at Mieza. His motivations of following Alexander into Asia are obscure; perhaps material ambitions and scientific curiosity, and/or a generous motive, to persuade Alexander in restoring his native city of Olynthus, as presumed by Plutarch (*Alex.* 53; *Mor.* 1043D). As to his character, either Callisthenes was a man of principles and a brave defender of traditional Hellenic (both Macedonian and Greek) values, or he was a person whose arrogance and self-conceit were enormous; it could be that both possibilities were true in the same time. Callisthenes, who was outspoken and proud, was at the same time too much aware of his own intellectual value, but he was not very conscious of his real place in Alexander's political system. Callisthenes the courageous man of honour, or Callisthenes the arrogant fool, this is the first problem; the second is Callisthenes the defender of public liberty, or Callisthenes the king's flatterer and personal historian, who was prone to flatter Alexander because he was duty bound to do so. This is Callisthenes' riddle, and his true individuality remains an enigma.¹⁸

Alexander's scheme against Callisthenes succeeded. The older Macedonian commanders were no more on the philosopher's side. Callisthenes was now isolated. Alexander's policy of relying more and more on fresh Iranian recruits (a policy undoubtedly determined by sheer necessity and lack of sufficient Macedonian and Greek manpower) made him unpopular, not only among the elder *ἐταῖροι*, but also among the youngest Macedonian members of his court. These were his future high-ranking officers and officials, the dignitaries and military commanders of tomorrow, the "Royal Pages" (*βασιλικοὶ παῖδες*).

Hunting was a favorite sport and a form of military training in both Ancient Macedonia and Ancient Iran. Hunting was the occupation of kings and aristocrats, especially the hunt of lions (mainly in the East), and hunting of wild boars, bears, and buffaloes (especially in Macedonia). One duty performed by the noble youths that formed the corps of "Royal Pages" (all of them sons of the Macedonian aristocrats) was to escort their king to the hunt. Arrian (*An.* IV 13.1–2) and Q. Curtius Rufus (VIII 6.2–6) described how one of these youngsters, Hermolaus son of Sopolis, has speared a wild boar before Alexander did; in fact, the boar attacked Alexander, and Hermolaus rushed forward to help his king. Alexander was furious, because he was slower; not only his pride was hurt, but apparently also the Macedonian and Achaemenid royal protocol. The king must face and kill the beast that opposed him, be it a lion, a boar, or a bear etc., in single combat. Only if the king was attacked by more than one ferocious animal, his servants were allowed to help him.¹⁹ Plu-

18 W.Z. RUBINSOHN "The Philosopher at Court—Intellectuals and Politics in the Time of Alexander Great", in: *Ancient Macedonia, V: Papers Read at the Fifth International Symposium held in Thessaloniki, October 10–15, 1989*, II, Thessaloniki 1993, 1302–1303, 1308–1311; GREEN, *Alexander* (n. 4), 161–163, 374–379; A. SUCEVEANU, *Alexandru cel Mare*, Bucharest 1993, 14–15, 189, 192–193.

19 P. BRIANT, "Les Chasses d'Alexandre", in: *Ancient Macedonia, V: Papers Read at the Fifth Interna-*

tarch (*Alex.* 40.4) narrated how Alexander killed a magnificent lion (the king hunted the royal beast), and was praised for that by a Lacedaemonian ambassador. Q. Curtius Rufus (VIII 1.11) wrote about a Sogdian hunting organized by Alexander and his ἑταῖροι in the region of Bazaira (Bazira). There was the scene of another exploit; the Macedonians killed around 4000 wild animals, and Alexander, who had been attacked by a powerful lion, rejected the aid of Lysimachus. The king said that he was able to fight the lion alone; the same Lysimachus did in a previous hunt in Syria. After the hunt the Macedonians decided that, *gentis suae more*, Alexander should never hunt on foot and unattended by his ἑταῖροι. All these examples prove beyond doubt that, although with the best intentions of saving his king's life, Hermolaus breached a protocol rule. Alexander reacted by punishing Hermolaus for this breach of protocol, by flogging him publicly and taking away his horse (Arr. *An.* IV 13.2). As a result, Hermolaus along with some other young Macedonian nobles hatched a plot to kill the king (Arr. *An.* IV 13.3–4). The conspiracy to assassinate Alexander failed, one of them informed Ptolemy, and they were discovered, arrested, and interrogated under torture (Arr. *An.* IV 13.5–7). Being tortured, the young Pages confessed their involvement in the conspiracy and their accomplices. Ptolemy and Aristobulus, Arrian's main sources, mentioned that under torture the Pages avowed that Callisthenes was involved in the conspiracy. Arrian's other sources, although they probably mentioned the Pages put to torture, never did mention the last allegation of Callisthenes' involvement. Even Arrian wrote that Alexander's hatred against Callisthenes (he was the man that opposed Alexander's deification and the προσκύνησις practice for the Macedonians and Greeks) and the close friendship between Callisthenes and Hermolaus were enough for Alexander to accuse Callisthenes of involvement in this conspiracy (Arr. *An.* IV 14.1). Q. Curtius Rufus (VIII 6–8), who described the plot and its aftermath in detail, does not mention Callisthenes as a conspiracy member. He only encouraged Hermolaus after his flogging to be a man and said of Alexander that the king must not forget the gods are human beings (a Spartan-style encouragement for Hermolaus, and an allusion at Alexander's own mortality and his deification ambitions?). Callisthenes' case after the προσκύνησις and ἀποθέωσις affair, and before the conspiracy, was presented by Plutarch (*Alex.* 55) as a succession of court-intrigues engineered by Alexander and Hephaestion: the former worked in the shadow, while the latter, acting as the king's most trusted man, said that Callisthenes first accepted to perform προσκύνησις, and then went back on his word. Other courtiers and flatterers, like Lysimachus and Hagnon, were spreading rumors that Callisthenes taught the "Royal Pages" he was the only free man among many, and when asked, how can one become famous, he answered: "By killing the most famous of men". He supposedly even told Hermolaus not to fear Alexander's golden couch, because it was also suited for a wounded or a sick man, as well as for a king. All these sayings could be authentic, but they also could be part of a deliberate campaign of royal propaganda directed against the new *persona non grata*. This campaign was engineered, if this was the case, by Alexander's inner circle of friends, in order to prepare Callisthenes's impeachment. Alexander himself in a letter to Craterus, Attalus, and Alcetas, does not mention Callisthenes among those involved in the Pages' conjuration. It is true that in a later letter to Antipater, Alexander accuses Callisthenes of being one of the con-

tional Symposium held in Thessaloniki, October 10–15, 1989, I, Thessaloniki 1993, 269–270 and 274–275.

spirators. This letter is full of menaces directed against Aristotle and Antipater himself, suspected by Alexander of not sharing his political vision, if not even of secret thoughts of high treason. Antipater's sympathy for the conspirators, at least at that stage, has no proof. The conspirators' fate was dire; the Pages involved in the conspiracy were brought before the Macedonian military assembly and subjected to a military trial (Alexander as Macedonian king being their prosecutor). After being convicted (they were condemned for high treason), the conspirators were sentenced to death and stoned by the Macedonians (Arr. *An.* IV 14.2–3). Hermolaus, whose courageous defense against Alexander's accusations proved futile, faced the indictment and shared the fate of his fellow-conspirators. The king spared the relatives of the condemned persons, although Macedonian law permitted their execution. The king allowed them to live, probably because he was not convinced they were guilty, and he did not want to lose popularity among his Macedonians. Callisthenes, according to one version of events, transmitted by Ptolemy, was arrested, tortured, and hanged. The Macedonians did not judge him, for he was a Greek civilian (the whole problem of the possible connection between the conspirators and Callisthenes in Q. Curtius Rufus VIII 6–8, originated most probably from Cleitarchus). According to Aristobulus, Callisthenes was put in chains and forced to march with the army, until he fell ill and died (Arr. *An.* IV 14.3–4). This last version mitigates Alexander's guilt, in a way not unlike Chares' version (Plu. *Alex.* 55). The version of Chares narrates that Callisthenes was put in chains and imprisoned for seven months, for he was to be judged in the presence of Aristotle himself, but he died in prison of overweight and full of lice. Therefore Alexander was unstained by Callisthenes' death, which was due to sickness and the usual squalor of jails.

The versions of Aristobulus and Chares tried to show a law-abiding Alexander. Ptolemy and Aristobulus, who were close to king Alexander, probably invented Callisthenes' involvement in the Pages' conspiracy, because it is most likely that Hermolaus and his fellow-conspirators never accused Callisthenes of partaking in their plot. This is at least the image our sources (and the sources on which the extant sources are built) provide, with the notable exceptions of Ptolemy and Aristobulus. Another problem is why these two essential sources diverge on Callisthenes' death; possibly because Aristobulus knew the official version, but Ptolemy assisted at Callisthenes' hanging, and later, as he was already an old king of Egypt, he allowed himself the luxury of telling the truth about Alexander and Callisthenes. Nevertheless, this is only speculation. However, anything was good to justify the king's measures, although it is very possible that Callisthenes' name was not associated with a conspiracy whatsoever. The fact that even under torture the conspirators did not pronounce his name could plead for his innocence, but again, one must remember that this affirmation is only a probability, and not a hard fact. Only on circumstantial evidence one can never decide who the culprit is.

Ptolemy and Aristobulus could as well tell the truth when they implied that Callisthenes was denounced as the moral author of the conspirators' action. The real problem behind Callisthenes' guilt or innocence is his real opposition to Alexander's new policy and to Alexander's deification. For the Macedonians the *proskynesis* (προσκύνησις) ritual was not only humiliating, but also it was a clear sign of Alexander's ἀποθέωσις during his lifetime. Deification or *apotheosis* (ἀποθέωσις) was a Greek religious practice seldom conferred upon exceptional mortals, and usually bestowed *post mortem*. The Greeks had a cult for heroes, who were extraordinary men during their lifetime; but essentially this was a cult of

the dead. There were but a few heroes or demigods who became Olympian gods (almost the only example was Heracles, Alexander's alleged ancestor; Achilles, the other role-model and supposed ancestor of Alexander, had only a heroic cult of a great hero and a demigod); and these honours were conferred after their death.

There were but a few notorious cases of heroic or divine cult conferred upon illustrious men of the historical period before Alexander's time. The cases of Brasidas, Lysander, Dion of Syracuse, Amyntas III, and Philip II suggested more a heroic than a divine cult, *post mortem* conferred upon them (with Lysander's possible exception). In fact, Lysander's case could be a divine cult instituted during his lifetime, but it would be the only exception of a ruler and military commander deified before Alexander's time. Even in the case of Lysander the evidence is inconclusive and the scholarly debate continues. Anyway, it is more prudent to say that is difficult to find in the Greek world of the late 5th and most of the 4th century BC a certain case of a deified person during his lifetime. E. Badian once remarked: "There is no secure evidence for any exception to Callisthenes' statement regarding deification of living men before Alexander; each of the cases alleged fails to pass the test of the usual criteria of scholarship".²⁰

Callisthenes wanted to defend the Macedonian and Homeric ideal of a king who was a *primus inter pares* among his ἑταῖροι; but, caught in the power game played at Alexander's court, the intellectual as well as the warriors (Philotas, Parmenio, Cleitus, Hermolaus, etc.) have lost their own lives.

1.3 The Aftermath: The Fate of Callisthenes' "History of Alexander" – Conclusions

We know that Callisthenes of Olynthus had the role of personal historian and king's own biographer at Alexander's court. Although we do not know for sure what was the precise title of his history about Alexander of Macedon: according to later authors of historical commentaries, one knows that the probable title of his history was "The Deeds of Alexander" (Ἀλεξάνδρου πράξεις/Ἀλεξάνδρου ἔργα). Another important historical work of Callisthenes perhaps bore the title *Hellenica* (Ἑλληνικά). Callisthenes of Olynthus was the son of Hero, a nephew of Aristotle. The former historical work ("The Deeds of Alexander") was about the reign of Alexander the Great; the latter was all about the Greek history of the 4th century BC. The *Hellenica* of Callisthenes continued in all probability Xenophon's *Hellenica*: according to the few surviving fragments, Callisthenes' *Hellenica* recorded the actions of exceptional and heroic figures of the Greek 4th century BC: namely the Thebans Gorgidas, Pelopidas, and Epaminondas, the creators of the elite Theban shock troop "the Sacred Battalion" and of the Theban tactics of attacking with a strengthened left wing of the phalanx. As for the "History of Alexander/The Deeds of Alexander" written by Callisthenes, it probably began with Alexander's rise to royal power in Macedonia (336 BC) or with his crossing of the Hellespont into Asia Minor (334 BC) and continued at least until the battle of Gaugamela (1st of October 331 BC) or until Alexander's conquest of Western and

20 E. BADIAN "The Deification of Alexander the Great", in: H.J. Dell and Ch.F. Edson (eds.), *Ancient Macedonian Studies in Honour of Charles F. Edson*, Thessaloniki 1981, 33–44 (especially 44); for the position of a Macedonian king and the relationship with his ἑταῖροι, see G.S. STAGAKIS, "Observations on the ἑταῖροι of Alexander the Great", in: *Ancient Macedonia, I: Papers Read At the First International Symposium Held in Thessaloniki 26–29 August 1968*, Thessaloniki 1970, 86–102.

Central Iran (330 BC). Callisthenes will be arrested and imprisoned around the year 327 BC and his death (either in prison or executed by hanging) would not have been too distant from the date of his imprisonment. One cannot know whether or not his “History of Alexander/The Deeds of Alexander” included also Alexander’s Macedonian campaigns of conquest of Eastern Iran and Southern Central Asia (that were in fact three years of bloody Macedonian military expeditions and fierce guerrilla warfare of the Bactrian, Sogdian, and Sakā warlike horsemen, namely between 330–327 BC). After Callisthenes’ death, we do not know what happened exactly to his historical work.

However, according to Plutarch, a first version of the *Journal* (the ‘Εφημερίδες/*Ephemerides*) that were kept by Alexander’s chief secretary or chancellor Eumenes of Cardia had burnt along with Eumenes’ tent in India in the year 326 BC; if Plutarch is right, the *Journal* was interdependent with Callisthenes’ history of Alexander’s reign.²¹ This interdependence was in the sense that the *Ephemerides* (the *Journal*) was one of the sources (if not the main source) of Callisthenes’ history. We also do not know precisely the character of this *Journal*: was it a royal personal diary, where Alexander recorded the daily events of his life? Or was it an official *Royal Journal* that registered the daily routine of King Alexander within the frame imposed on him by the rituals of the Macedonian and Iranian royal etiquette? There is also another possibility that the *Journal* was in fact the official military diary of the Macedonian army and of the Macedonian King (after all, Alexander’s royal itinerant court was also the headquarters of his campaigning army). All we do know for sure is that Eumenes of Cardia was the keeper of this *Journal*. It is also probable that Callisthenes’ unfinished history of Alexander’s reign, after his imprisonment, trial, and execution was burnt also along with the other papers from Eumenes’ tent.²² Because this history is preserved in a few known fragments quoted in Strabo’s *Geography*, in Plutarch’s *Vita Alexandri*, and in Arrian’s *Anabasis Alexandri* and because it has possibly influenced the Cleitarchus’ “History of Alexander” and thus all the subsequent *Vulgata* about Alexander of Macedon, probably it was only partially burnt or even Callisthenes’ history was not burnt at all. Maybe this history was not in Eumenes’ tent in India, but in Alexander’s royal tent. One cannot know for sure, but we can only suspect and imagine various scenarios on shreds of late and indirect evidence (namely the preserved “children” so to speak of Cleitarchus’ history *i.e.* the histories of Alexander the Great written by Diodorus Siculus, by Q. Curtius Rufus, by Trogus Pompeius with the preserved epitome of Justinus, the *Epitome Mettensis*, and the so-called “Alexander Romance” of Pseudo-Callisthenes). We also know that after Alexander’s death at Babylon in June 323 BC, the regent

21 Plu. *Eum.* 2.2–3; vide C.A. ROBINSON JR., *The History of Alexander the Great*, Providence 1963, II.1, 4. Plutarch actually wrote that the fire put to Eumenes’ barrack or tent was no accident, but was indeed intentionally put by Alexander’s order to destroy the riches Eumenes kept hidden for himself, not sharing with his and Alexander’s fellow Companions and brothers in arms. The idea was not to kill Eumenes, who was not then in his tent, but to deprive him of the riches he had accumulated and possibly also to destroy some compromising documents that perhaps were involving the King in dubious political dealings.

22 SUCEVEANU, *Alexandru* (n. 18), 14. The principal persons responsible for the writing and up keeping of this journal were three: Eumenes of Cardia in his quality as Chief Secretary or *archigrammateus* (ἀρχιγραμματεὺς), his right hand man Diodotus of Erythraea, and possibly also Chares of Mytilene in his quality of spokesman, king’s announcer, or official royal speaker or *eisangeleus* (εἰσαγγελεὺς).

Perdiccas presented to the military assembly of Alexander's Macedonian soldiers (both infantry and cavalry) the royal memoirs containing his future conquest plans in the area of the "Hyrcanian" *i.e.* Caspian Sea and on the coasts of the Arabian peninsula (possibly also in North Africa, Spain, Sicily, and Italy, in the Central-West Mediterranean Sea). These "Memoirs" or 'Υπομνήματα (*Hypomnemata* on their Greek name) in their turn could have been at least partially preserved documents that survived from the fire that burnt the tent of Eumenes in India and documents that have been conceived by Alexander after 326 BC, but also they could well have been also (at least partly) documents forged by Perdiccas in order to deter the war weary Macedonian veterans from further conquest that Alexander and probably also "war hawks" from his Companions wanted. These Macedonian "war hawks" could have been also Perdiccas' rivals in the struggle for supreme power after Alexander's unexpected illness, agony, and death.²³

Therefore, the influence of Callisthenes' history of Alexander's reign (that could have encompassed the events at most until the year 328 BC, when Cleitus was murdered by Alexander) would have been felt by subsequent histories and historians of the Macedonian, beginning with Cleitarchus.²⁴

We shall conclude: although Callisthenes died in prison because of lice and suffering (he was forced to accompany in chains the troops of Alexander into India or he was hanged),²⁵ his history had probably survived, at least in part, the burning of Eumenes' tent in India in the year 326 BC. Maybe it has subsequently influenced the history of Alexander of Macedon written by Cleitarchus (as one can judge by the few fragments attributed to Callisthenes in the later preserved histories of Alexander the Great) and through Cleitarchus its influence has reached the authors of the later Hellenistic and Roman Imperial Age. The complex relationship of collaboration, estrangement, and then enmity that evolved between Alexander the Great and his personal historian must be seen, in my humble opinion, as embedded in the political and social fabrics of the itinerant Macedonian-Iranian Royal Court of Alexander the Great. Callisthenes has in the end consciously chosen the faction of the older Macedonian Guard (composed of Macedonian military officers and aristocrats such as the brave but unfortunate Cleitus the Black, hostile to Alexander's political innovations in the royal protocol as well as in his friendly policy towards the defeated Persian noblemen who chose to become his collaborators in Iran). This Macedonian older Guard vied for supremacy at court and strove to change the course of Alexander's politics; they also combated the influence of the new generation of Macedonian young officers, nobles, and intellectuals, Alexander's new Macedonian and Greek Guard, who were prone to sustain Alexander's pro-Iranian policy. Seen in this light, Callisthenes ceases to be a simple

23 ROBINSON, *History* (n. 21), II.1, 4.

24 L. PEARSON, *The Lost Histories of Alexander the Great*, New York 1960, 33–39 and 40–49; N.G.L. HAMMOND, *Sources for Alexander the Great: An Analysis of Plutarch's Life and Arrian's Anabasis Alexandrou*, Cambridge 1993, 173, 185, 217, 224; A.M. DEVINE, "Alexander's Propaganda Machine: Callisthenes as the Ultimate Source for Arrian, *Anabasis* 1–3", in: I. Worthington (ed.), *Ventures into Greek History*, Oxford 1994, 89–102 on the influence of Callisthenes' narrative on the descriptions of Alexander's three great battles against the Persians (Granicus, Issus, Gaugamela); A.B. BOSWORTH, "The Sources: Introduction: Some Basic Principles", in: Worthington, *Alexander* (n. 10), 7–16 (esp. 8–9).

25 Plu. *Alex.* 55.5; Arr. *An.* IV 14.3.

court historian and royal biographer, ordered to transmit the “royal” truth or the official version of things; he becomes instead a man who dared to defend what he believed in, a fact that proved to be a fatal mistake in his case (and not only in his case). It is not at all sure that he was directly involved in the conspiracy of the “Royal Children” (βασιλικοὶ παῖδες) that were led by Hermolaus. In Alexander’s brave new world men like Callisthenes were no longer needed (at least according to the tradition transmitted by Aristotle and by Theophrastus of the Peripatetic School). The future belonged to men like Anaxarchus the sophist and the court poet and King’s flatterer, Agis of Argos.²⁶

²⁶ Curt. VIII 5; Arr. *An.* IV 10.5–7; as for the discourse of Callisthenes about the heroic/divine honors bestowed upon Alexander during his lifetime, *vide* Arr. *An.* IV 11.2–9.

Another Note on Deification of Alexander in Athens^{*}

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As to this moment there have been many articles and books published which undertook the problem of deification of the Hellenistic kings and a number of articles on deification of Alexander in particular. This paper has been greatly inspired by the article of G.L. Cawkwell on the matter, and its title is meant to refer to and complement the aforesaid paper.¹

The deification of Alexander the Great has been often addressed as a universal phenomenon that uniformly appeared in the cities of Asia, Egypt, and mainland Greece. By careful examination of four episodes from Alexander's life, namely: (i) his visit to the oasis of Ammon in Siwa, (ii) the banquet at Baktra, (iii) the mutiny at Opis, and (iv) the edict demanding divine honours from the Greek cities,² scholars have so far taken position for or against Alexander's deification during his life. While the sources leave very little doubt that Alexander was granted divine honours in the *poleis* of Asia,³ the question of Alexander's deification in Athens still raises suspicion.

In the modern scholarship it has been generally accepted that Athenians, after a fiery debate in the *ekklesia* in 324 BC, did in fact deify Alexander.⁴ Perhaps the reason that

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1 G.L. CAWKWELL, "The Deification of Alexander the Great: A Note", in: I. Worthington (ed.), *Ventures into Greek History*, Oxford 1994, 293-306.

2 D.G. HOGARTH, "The Deification of Alexander the Great", *EHR* 2.6 (1887), 318; cf. P. CARTLEDGE, *Alexander the Great: The Hunt for a New Past*, London 2004, 221.

3 For compelling evidence see C. HABICHT, *Gottmenschentum und Griechische Städte*, Munich 1970², 17-25; cf. A. CHANIOTIS, "The Divinity of Hellenistic Rulers", in: A. Erskine (ed.), *A Companion to the Hellenistic World*, Oxford 2003, 435.

4 See E.R. BEVAN, "The Deification of Kings in the Greek Cities", *EHR* 16.64 (1901), 625; A.D. NOCK, "Notes on Ruler-Cult I-IV", *JHS* 48 (1928), 22 (however, Nock has argued that Alexander was recognized as a son of god, not a god); F.A. WRIGHT, *Alexander the Great*, London 1934, 229-230; W.W. TARN, *Alexander the Great*, II, Cambridge 1948, 373; W.W. TARN, "Alexander: The Conquest of the Far East", in: *Cambridge Ancient History*, VI, Cambridge 1953, 419 and W.W. TARN "Greece: 335 to 321 B.C.", in: *Cambridge Ancient History*, VI, Cambridge 1953, 451; HABICHT, *Gottmenschentum* (n. 3), 29; J. SEIBERT, *Alexander der Grosse*, Darmstadt 1972, 201; F. SCHACHERMEYER, *Alexander der Grosse. Das Problem seiner Persönlichkeit und seines Wirkens*, Vienna 1973, 529; E.A. FREDRICKSMEYER, "Three Notes on Alexander's Deification", *AJAH* 4 (1979), 6; E. BADIAN, "The Deification of Alexander the Great", in: H.J. Dell (ed.), *Ancient Macedonian Studies in Honor of Charles W. Edson*, Thessaloniki 1981, 55; A.B. BOSWORTH, *Alexander and the East: The Tragedy of Triumph*, Oxford 1996, 132; R. PARKER, *Athenian Religion: A History*, Oxford 1996, 257; J.D. MIKALSON, *Religion in Hellenistic Athens*, Berkeley/London 1998, 47; CARTLEDGE, *Alexander* (n. 2), 225-226; A.B. BOSWORTH, *Conquest and Empire: The Reign of Alexander the Great*, Cambridge 1988, 288-289; K. NAWOTKA, *Alexander the Great*, Newcastle upon Tyne 2010, 359.

stands behind such scholarly opinions is a belief that the Greek world as a whole stood united when challenged by the question of deification.⁵ One conscious that such position is one of many modern methodological constructs of the ancient world should be aware that the arguments presented for Alexander's deification in Asia cannot serve as evidence for his deification in Athens and *vice versa*.⁶ Only several scholars who have underlined the strong anti-Macedonian attitude of the Athenians at the end of Alexander's life either doubted in the deification of Alexander in Athens and left the question open,⁷ or opposed it.⁸

It is also remarkable that the question of Alexander's deification in Athens has been so far mainly addressed by the scholars interested in the history of Alexander, not the regional history of Athens and Attica. This paper aims at presenting the question from the Athenians' point of view, analysing the events of the famous *ekklesia* of 324, and it supports the opinion that Alexander was not deified in Athens.

There are several passages in the Attic oratory contemporary with the events of 324 BC that refer to the question of deification of Alexander. In the speech of Hyperides against Demosthenes the latter was supposed to say: "Recognize him [i.e. Alexander – P.S.] as the son of Zeus. Recognize him as son of Poseidon too, if he would like it".⁹ There should be no doubt that Demosthenes said those words, since Dinarchus came against him with charges basing on supposedly the same announcement.¹⁰ "At one time he made a proposal forbidding anyone to believe in any but the accepted gods and at another said that the people must not question the grant of divine honours to Alexander".¹¹ Since Demosthenes was commonly known as a fierce opponent of Alexander, the irony in his proposal is easy to recognize.¹² Furthermore, one does not need to go as far as Ernst Badian and explain that:

5 See BOSWORTH, *Alexander* (n. 4), 132: 'The cult was therefore designed as a tool of universal monarchy'.

6 See BEVAN, "Deification" (n. 4), 626.

7 U. WILCKEN, *Alexander the Great*, trans. by G.C. Richards, New York 1967, 212; A.B. BOSWORTH, "Alexander the Great Part 2: Greece and the conquered territories", in: *Cambridge Ancient History*², VI, Cambridge 1994, 875 ("some honours may have been voted (...), but they certainly lapsed at the beginning of the Lamian War") – the scholar soon changed his mind, see note 4; P. BRIANT, *Alexander the Great and His Empire: A Short Introduction*, trans. by A. Kuhrt, Princeton/Oxford 2010, 136-137.

8 J.P.V.D. BALSDON, "The 'Divinity' of Alexander", *Historia* 1 (1950), 384-386; E.J. BICKERMAN, "Sur un passage d'Hypéride (*Epitaphios*, col. VIII)", *Athenaeum* 41 (1963), 70-74 has raised important arguments against the deification, though he has summarized (75): "Je ne prétends pas que les Athéniens n'aient pas vénéré Alexandre comme dieu. Je prie seulement d'observer que rien d'authentique n'indique l'existence du culte d'Alexandre à Athènes". Only CAWKWELL, "Deification" (n. 1), 302 strongly objected the deification of Alexander in Athens.

9 Hyp. Dem. 31: ἐν τῷ δῆμῳ συγχωρῶν Ἀλεξάνδρῳ καὶ τοῦ Διὸς καὶ τοῦ Ποσειδῶνος εἶ[ναι εἰ βούλ]οιτο. Trans. by BALSDON, "'Divinity'" (n. 8), 383.

10 Cf. FREDRICKSMEYER, "Three" (n. 4), 6.

11 Din. Dem. 94: καὶ τότε μὲν γράφων καὶ ἀπαγορεύων μηδένα νομίζειν ἄλλον θεὸν ἢ τοὺς παραδεδομένους, τότε δὲ λέγων ὡς οὐ δεῖ τὸν δῆμον ἀμφισβητεῖν τῶν ἐν τῷ οὐρανῷ τιμῶν Ἀλεξάνδρῳ. Trans. by BURTT (Loeb) 1973.

12 BADIAN, "Deification" (n. 4), 54; cf. BALSDON, "'Divinity'" (n. 8), 383 ("highly satirical remark"), SCHACHERMEYER, *Alexander* (n. 4), 529 ("selbst Demosthenes (...) empfahl dem Volk mit feinem Sarkasmus"), and FREDRICKSMEYER, "Three" (n. 4), 6 ("sarcastic"). *Contra*: H. BERVE, *Das Alexanderreich auf prosopographischer Grundlage*, II, Munich 1926, 138; TARN, "Greece" (n. 4), 451 ("he [i.e. Demosthenes – P.S.] saw that Alexander was in earnest, and that the risk in opposing him was seri-

(i) Demosthenes proposed to recognize Alexander's divine sonship but not his divinity,¹³ and (ii) sons of Poseidon "were conventionally regarded as disreputable characters".¹⁴ It is also perfectly understandable why the political opponents of Demosthenes remained insensitive to his sarcasm and decided to treat his words literally. L.L. Gunderson has even argued that Dinarchus may have deliberately misconstrued Demosthenes' comment because the large part of the audience had not understood Demosthenes properly.¹⁵

Another passage in Hyperides mentioning that supposedly Demosthenes proposed to set up a statue to Alexander "the god invincible" could also be ironical,¹⁶ and Badian has observed that there is a gap in the papyrus between the phrase with the "god invincible" and the phrase with Demosthenes, so, although the scholar has thought of it as rather unlikely, the subject of proposal could have changed from Demosthenes to someone else.¹⁷ Polybius, who cited Callisthenes at that occasion, attested that Demosthenes as well as the other orators who flourished at that time did not hesitate and opposed the idea of granting Alexander with divine honours.¹⁸ E. Meyer has convincingly argued that even if Demosthenes was serious while speaking the words cited by Hyperides, he must have been forced to say them.¹⁹

There is one passage that stands in accordance with the supposed irony of Demosthenes, the words ascribed to Lysurgus in Plutarch's *Life of the Ten Orators*: "What sort of a god can this be when the first thing that you would have to do on leaving his temple would be to purify yourself".²⁰ However, with this passage the irony ends.

Perhaps the most disputed passage on the problem comes from the *Funeral Speech* of Hyperides from 322 when he spoke:

"This is clear from what we are compelled to put up with even now to stand by and watch sacrifices being made to men, statues, altars, and temples being completed carelessly for the gods but meticulously for men, and ourselves being forced to honour these men's servants as heroes."²¹

ous").

13 Divine sonship, as Badian has convincingly argued, was of much lesser status than the divinity itself – see Badian, "Deification" (n. 4), 53. Cf. BERVE, *Alexanderreich* (n. 12), I 95; NOCK, „Notes" (n. 4), 22, 25; L. EDMUNDS, "The Religiosity of Alexander", *GRBS* 12 (1971), 380-381; A.B. BOSWORTH, "Alexander and Ammon", in: K.H. Kinzl (ed.), *Greece and the Eastern Mediterranean in Ancient History and Prehistory: Studies Presented to F. Schachermeyr on the Occasion of his Eightieth Birthday*, Berlin/New York 1977, 61-66.

14 Badian, "Deification" (n. 4), 54.

15 L.L. GUNDERSON, "Alexander and the Attic Orators", in: H.J. Dell (ed.), *Ancient Macedonian Studies in Honor of Charles W. Edson*, Thessaloniki 1981, 189.

16 Hyp. Dem. 32: [- - -] ἐβούλετο[ο - - -] στήσαι εἰκό[να Ἀλεξάνδ]ρου Βασιλ[έως τοῦ ἀνι]κῆτου θε[οῦ - - -].

17 Badian, "Deification" (n. 4), 54, n. 43.

18 Plb. XII 12b: καὶ Δημοσθένην μὲν καὶ τοὺς ἄλλους ῥήτορας τοὺς κατ' ἐκεῖνον τὸν καιρὸν ἀκμάσαντας ἐπαινεῖ καὶ φησι τῆς Ἑλλάδος ἀξίους γεγονέναι, διότι ταῖς Ἀλεξάνδρου τιμαῖς ταῖς ἰσοθέοις ἀντέλεγον.

19 E. MEYER, *Kleine Schriften*, II, Halle 1924, 312, n. 2.

20 Plu. Vit. X Orat. 7, Mor. 842 D: καὶ ποδαπὸς ἂν εἴη, εἶπεν, ὁ θεὸς οὗ τὸ ἱερὸν ἐξιόντας δεήσει περιπραίνεσθαι. Trans. by Balsdon, "Divinity" (n. 8), 383.

21 Hyp. Epit. 21: φανερόν δ' ἐξ ὧν ἀναγκάζομεθα καὶ νῦν ἔτι θυσίας μὲν ἀνθρώποις γ[ιγνο]μένας ἐφορᾶν, ἀγάλμ[ατα δὲ] καὶ βωμοὺς καὶ ναοὺς τοῖς μὲν θεοῖς ἀμελῶς, τοῖς δὲ ἀνθρώ[ποις] ἐπιμελῶς συντελούμενα, καὶ τοὺς <τοῦ>των οἰκέτας ὥσπερ ἥρωας τιμᾶν ἡμᾶς ἀναγκάζομένους. Trans. by

The reference of Hyperides to deified Alexander and heroic honours paid to Hephaestion lies rather beyond doubt,²² but the main concern of the scholars has lied in the verb ἀναγκαζόμεθα (we are compelled) being changed to ἡναγκαζόμεθα (we were compelled) in some editions of the text.²³ While ἀναγκαζόμεθα is attested in all the papyri, ἡναγκαζόμεθα is a conjecture first proposed by F. Blass in his Teubner edition of Hyperides from 1894 and later accepted by numerous scholars. If one accepts the conjecture, there should be rather no doubt that the Athenians were forced and did in fact deify Alexander. E.J. Bickerman has, however, convincingly argued that the style of Hyperides rather requires the present ἀναγκαζόμεθα than the imperfect ἡναγκαζόμεθα, the former standing in accordance with all the attested papyri versions.²⁴ Hence, the acceptance of the conjecture requires a deliberate ignorance of all the attested papyri versions and stylistic requirements. In other words, one needs to be sure that Alexander was deified in Athens to propose the change in tense of the discussed verb.

The rest of the events of 324 in Athens is known from much later sources. One can ascertain that Demades spoke before *ekklesia* and proposed to pass a decree on deification, because sometime later he was fined 10 or 100 talents on a charge of *asebeia* exactly because of that proposal.²⁵ Eventually, Demades could not pay the fine and lost his citizen rights.²⁶ One famous passage of Valerius Maximus asserts that Demades was supposed to say during the debate on deification of Alexander: “see that as long as you guard the heaven you would not lose the land”,²⁷ and it has been observed that Alexander was at that time to decide the fate of Samos and the Athenian cleruchy on the island.²⁸ Athenaeus refers to Demades’ proposal with the verb εἰσηγήσατο which can have both indefinite and definite aspect.²⁹ The decree could have been passed or not, but the proposal itself was enough to charge Demades.³⁰ Aelian leaves much less space for speculation, he describes the action of Demades as follows: ὁ Δημάδης ἐψηφίσατο θεὸν τὸν Ἀλέξανδρον τρισκαίδέκατον. The problem of calling Alexander a thirteenth god raises some other problems and has its own literature,³¹ but what here appears to me as the most striking feature is the usage of the medium voice aorist ἐψηφίσατο.

CAWKWELL, “Deification” (n. 1), 297.

22 See HABICHT, *Gottmenschentum* (n. 3), 29-30.

23 Existing discussion on this topic has been thoroughly cited and commented in CAWKWELL, “Deification” (n. 1), 297-298. Cf. HABICHT, *Gottmenschentum* (n. 3), 29.

24 BICKERMAN, “Sur un passage” (n. 8), 71.

25 10 talents – Ath. VI 58: Δημάδην δὲ δέκα τάλαντοις ἐζημίωσαν, ὅτι θεὸν εἰσηγήσατο Ἀλέξανδρον; 100 talents – Ael. *VH* V 12: ἐκκλησίας οὐσης Ἀθηναίοις παρελθὼν ὁ Δημάδης ἐψηφίσατο θεὸν τὸν Ἀλέξανδρον τρισκαίδέκατον. τῆς δὲ ἀσεβείας ὁ δῆμος τὸ ὑπερβάλλον μὴ ἐνεγκὼν, ζημίαν ἐτιμήσαντο τῷ Δημάδῃ τάλάντων ἑκατόν, ὅτι θνητὸν διὰ τὸν Ἀλέξανδρον ὄντα ἐνέγραψε τοῖς Ὀλυμπίοις. See L.-L. O’SULLIVAN, “Athenian Impiety Trials in the Late Fourth Century B. C.”, *CQ* 47 (1997), 138-139.

26 Plu. *Phoc.* 26.2-3; see J.M. WILLIAMS, “Demades’ Last Years, 323/2-319/8 B.C.: A ‘Revisionist’ Interpretation”, *AncW* 19 (1989), 24; MIKALSON, *Religion* (n. 4), 48.

27 V.Max. VII 2.13: *videte, inquit, ne dum caelum custoditis terram amittatis.*

28 BICKERMAN, “Sur un passage” (n. 8), 84; PARKER, *Athenian* (n. 4), 257.

29 See *LSJ*⁹ s.v. εἰσηγέομαι.

30 Cf. WILLIAMS, “Demades” (n. 26), 24.

31 For further reading see NOCK, “Notes” (n. 4), 22, especially n. 7; BALSDON, “‘Divinity’” (n. 8), 387.

ἐψηφίσατο is well attested in epigraphy and in all cases the verb is employed to describe the vote passed by a collective body, in a vast majority of cases a vote passed by the δῆμος. There are only several instances where it is not *demos* as a subject, but ἡ σύνοδος, τὸ κοινόν, ἡ βουλή, ἡ πατρίς, ἡ ἐκκλησία, ἡ πόλις, τὸ ἔθνος, ἡ γερονσία and later, in Roman times, οἱ συνέδροι of the provincial councils,³² but it is clear that in the epigraphical sources the right to decide by casting votes was reserved for collective bodies only. The scale of use of the verb ψηφίζω in the medium voice with collective subject was so widespread both in time and space in the Greek epigraphy that there should be no doubt that it was a common linguistic phenomenon. It seems to me that the only exception to that rule took place in Ephesus and Miletus in the 1st to 3rd c. AD, but I shall discuss the evidence on that later on.

If I am not mistaken, Greek literary sources univocally used ψηφίζομαι in accordance with the aforesaid rule until the beginning of the 1st c. AD. Dionysius of Halicarnassus was well aware of the collective subject and used it consequently in all instances but one where he wrote: ὁ Ποστώμιος ἐψηφίσατο τὰς τῶν ναῶν τούτων κατασκευάς in the sense that the dictator Aulus Postumius made the vote pass in the Roman Senate on building of the temples of Ceres, Liber, and Libera.³³ Such breaking with the linguistic rule was in my opinion to underline Postumius' special legislative power at that time and cannot serve as an example of a new custom.

Other instances can be noted in Plutarch's *Lives*, though he was well aware of the common use of ψηφίζομαι and employed it in most cases with collective subject.³⁴ One of the passages reads:

“Pericles was then so fond of honour that he first made the decree pass (ἐψηφίσατο) to organize the musical contest at the Panathenaia, and, chosen to be the judge, he ordered in what manner the contestants had to play the *aulos*, sing, or play the *cithara*”.³⁵

This is only a short citation from a chapter describing Pericles' building program in Athens, and the use of ψηφίζομαι in such a specific context may refer to Pericles' immense influence on the Athenian *demos*, soon proven in Plutarch's account to be the most profitable for the Athenians, since a couple of passages later even the goddess Athena decided to help Pericles to miraculously heal a man who fell from the Acropolis hill while refurbishing the temple of Athena.³⁶ In two other passages from Plutarch's *Lives of the Ten*

32 *Synodos*: IG II² 1338 ([ἡ σύν]οδος τῶν περὶ τὸν Διόνυσον τεχνιτῶν); *koinon*: IG II² 1345 (τὸ κοινόν τῶν ἐρανιστῶν); *boule*: *InO* 941; *Milet* I 3, 139C, l. 23; *ISmyrna* 147 (ἡ κρατίστη βουλή τῆς πρώτης τῆς Ἀσίας); *IHalikarnassos* 17 l. 14; *Iscrizioni greche d'Italia. Napoli* I 85 l. 14; *patris*: *IOSPE* I² 39 l. 31; *IG* XII 5, 292, 328; *TAM* V 2, 829, ll. 13-14; *ekklesia*: *TAM* II 15, face III/IV, l. 12; *polis*: *TAM* II 175, 305; *MAMA* VI 180; *ethnos*: *TAM* II 497, 905 west wall col. VI, ll. 63-64; A. BALLAND, *Fouilles de Xanthos*, VII: *Inscriptions d'époque impériale du Létôon*, Paris 1981, n. 77, 89; *gerousia*: *IEphesos* 113, l. 22; *synedroi*: e.g. *SEG* 37.492 (Thessaly).

33 D.H. VI 17.4.

34 Plu. *Publ.* 23.4; *Cam.* 8.4; *Cor.* 1.1; *Arist.* 27.3; *Caes.* 21.1; 67.8; *Cat. Mi.* 39.3; *Dem.* 30.5; *Cic.* 12.4; *Galb.* 10.3; *Vit. X Orat.* 7; *Lyc.*, *Mor.* 844A.

35 Plu. *Per.* 13.11: φιλοτιμούμενος δ' ὁ Περικλῆς τότε πρῶτον ἐψηφίσατο μουσικῆς ἀγῶνα τοῖς Παναθηναίοις ἄγεσθαι, καὶ διέταξεν αὐτὸς ἀθλοθέτης αἰρεθεῖς, καθότι χρὴ τοὺς ἀγωνιζομένους αὐλεῖν ἢ ᾄδειν ἢ κιθαρίζειν.

36 Plu. *Per.* 13.12-13.

Orators it is said that Demosthenes and Hyperides were able to make the decrees pass,³⁷ and one can infer that if in Plutarch's narrative there was a single person as a subject to *ψηφίζομαι*, it referred to an individual with unquestionable authority and unique position in his land.³⁸

Now two questions arise: (i) whether Aelian applied the same principle as Plutarch when he referred to Demades' proposal of divine honours to Alexander, and (ii) whether Demades in 324 BC had such a great influence on the Athenian *demos* to make the decree on Alexander's deification pass? The question of the disputed passage in Aelian cannot be so simply solved, since there are only two cases when Aelian employed *ἐψηφίσατο* in his works, the first being the passage under discussion, and the second case a fragment cited by the *Suda* where a *boule* is said to have decreed a crown to some unknown individual.³⁹

Basing on two instances of *ψηφίζομαι* in Aelian only, it would be unwise to form any linguistic rules that Aelian could have applied to. On the other hand, the authority of Demades among the Athenians could be easily put into question, since in Aelian's anecdote Demades is litigated on a charge of *asebeia* in a sentence directly following the one on the deification of Alexander.⁴⁰ In Aelian's anecdote the *demos* could not bear (*μὴ ἐνεγκών*) such *asebeia* on Demades' part and it is grammatically possible to argue that Demades could have been litigated on the charge of *graphe paranomon* right after the meeting of the *ekklesia*,⁴¹ while *ἐψηφίσατο* would mean an ineffective move of the decree in that particular instance.

In the Athenian legal procedure a mover of a decree was always indicated by the verb *εἶπεν* which in literary sources, quite obviously, possessed much less formal meaning. Hence, the ancient authors needed other terms to describe an effective move and an ineffective one, but it appears that no rules were applied to it. Demosthenes in Plutarch's narrative was able to make a decree pass (*ἐψηφίσατο*), even though in the only extant decree where Demosthenes acted as a mover, he is indicated by the verb *εἶπεν*, and even Demosthenes himself referred to his legal initiatives in his famous speech *On the Crown* with the verb *ἔγραψα*.⁴² There is, however, a possibility that *ἐψηφίσατο* appeared in Aelian's anecdote on Demades as an intentional rhetorical device, bringing to mind the expressed wish of Alexander that appeared earlier in Aelian's work: *ἐπέστειλε τοῖς Ἑλλήσι θεὸν αὐτὸν ψηφίσασθαι*.⁴³ If it was so, *ἐψηφίσατο* in Ael. *VH V 12* may have not conveyed

37 Plu. *Vit. X Orat.* 8: *Dem.*, *Mor.* 848A; *Vit. X Orat.* 9: *Hyp.*, *Mor.* 849F.

38 Cf. Plu. *Publ.* 7.7; *Per.* 20.2; *Arat.* 45.8.

39 *Suda* s.v. *ῥασιτώνευσις*, Ael. fr. 321 (Hercher): ὁ δὲ τὴν κατασκευὴν τοῦ νεῷ πρεσβυτέραν τῆς ἑαυτοῦ ῥασιτώνευσεως ποιησάμενος, στέφανον ἐψηφίσατο ἢ βουλὴ δάφνης αὐτῷ.

40 Ael. *VH V 12* – see n. 25.

41 Cf. WILLIAMS, “Demades” (n. 26), 23.

42 Plu. *Vit. X Orat.* 8: *Dem.*, *Mor.* 848A. Decree: a proxy decree for Phokinos, Nikandros and Dexi[- - -], *IG II² 231* (340/39 BC) (= *IG II² 312a*); cf. S.D. LAMBERT, “The Only Extant Decree of Demosthenes”, *ZPE* 137 (2001), 57 (=S.D. LAMBERT, *Inscribed Athenian Laws and Decrees 352/1-322/1 BC: Epigraphical Essays*, Leiden/Boston 2012, 252). Demosthenes' proposal – Dem. XVIII 79: καὶ πρῶτον μὲν τὴν εἰς Πελοπόννησον πρεσβείαν ἔγραψα, ὅτε πρῶτον ἐκεῖνος εἰς Πελοπόννησον παρεδύετο, εἶτα τὴν εἰς Εὐβοίαν, ἥνικ' Εὐβοίας ἤπτετο, εἶτα τὴν ἐπ' Ὀρεὸν ἔξοδον, οὐκ ἐτι πρεσβείαν, καὶ τὴν εἰς Ἑρέτριαν, ἐπειδὴ τυράννους ἐκεῖνος ἐν ταύταις ταῖς πόλεσιν κατέστησεν.

43 Ael. *VH II 19*.

its literal meaning, but could have only expressed Demades' intention to grant Alexander's wish.

It can therefore be inferred that ἐψηφίσατο with a single person as a subject was either an intentional exaggeration of an author, or an effect of ambiguity of the word discussed. In the epigraphical evidence from Athens anything that stands close enough to ἐψηφίσατο to be taken into consideration is the formula ἐπεψήφισεν τῶν προέδρων in reference to the chairman (ἐπιστάτης) of the Athenian *proedroi*. The *proedroi* were a one-day committee which presided over the *boule* and *ekklesia* (if *ekklesia* had a meeting on that day) and was composed of the *epistates* of the *prytaneis* and representatives one each from all the tribes except the one in prytany.⁴⁴ The institution of a chairman of the *proedroi* was specific for Athens, the formula ἐπεψήφισεν τῶν προέδρων came into use in c. 341 BC⁴⁵ and lasted at least until the beginning of the 3rd c. AD,⁴⁶ so Demades being an *epistates* is surely a possibility worth considering. However, if someone became an *epistates* of the *proedroi*, he would be in effect incapable of moving a decree – in all the extant Athenian decrees with the formula ἐπεψήφισεν τῶν προέδρων, the *epistates* and the mover were always two different persons. Demades, if he was a mover, and quite certainly he was in the case discussed since the Athenians fined him for that fact, could not have been the *epistates* at the same time.⁴⁷ Therefore, a mistake of taking Demades' presidency over the *boule* and the *ekklesia* (ἐπεψήφισεν) for his 'making the decree pass' (ἐψηφίσατο) in Athens in one of the sources, which Aelian employed in his anecdote, could not have been made.

However, what was the rule in Athens did not have to necessarily be the rule in the whole Greek world. Ephesus of the Roman period provides a good example. 13 decrees, probably all coming from the time between 80/81 and 213-217 AD, contain a formula ψηφισαμένου or ψηφισαμένων followed by a name of an individual in the genitive, while the deciding body stands in nominative case. In 12 of them the mover or movers were simultaneously secretaries of the people,⁴⁸ while, in one inscription, two archons were the movers.⁴⁹ It is quite clear that ψηφισαμένου did not possess the ultimate power of making the decrees pass, but referred to the proposal only. The same phenomenon has been observed by K. Nawotka in Miletus in Imperial times.⁵⁰ On the other hand, it is also clear that the people presiding over the *ekklesia* (archons in case of Ephesus), could have been the movers at the same time.

In the latest inscription from the abovementioned collection, *IEphesos* 300 coming from 213-217 AD, it is even adduced about the secretaries that they ψηφισαμένων καὶ

44 A.S. HENRY, *The Prescripts of Athenian Decrees*, Leiden 1977, 39.

45 HENRY, *Prescripts* (n. 44), 40.

46 Cf. *IG* II² 1077.

47 Cf. the only inscription where it was supposedly Demades as a mover (the inscription is only fragmentary) and Demo[kr...] of Paiania (perhaps Demades' relative?) as a chairman, dated in 334/3 BC – see *IG* II² 335 + *SEG* XXI 274 (= *IG* II³ 334).

48 *IEphesos* 266 (124 AD), ll. 12-14; 276 (123-124 AD), ll. 13-15; 280 (124-125 AD), ll. 10-13; 300 (213-217 AD), ll. 7-11; 300A (date ?), ll. 8-10; 338 (ca. 140 AD), ll. 5-7; 441 (128/129 AD), ll. 9-11; 644A (date ?), ll. 10-15; 695 (80/81 AD), ll. 20-25; 793 (124/125 AD), ll. 8-14; 1500 (115/116 CE), ll. 9-12; 2050 (Antoninus Pius), ll. 10-12.

49 *IEphesos* 710 (date?), ll. 18-21.

50 K. NAWOTKA, *Boule and Demos in Miletus and Its Pontic Colonies from Classical Age until Third Century A.D.*, Wrocław 1999, 114.

εισηγησαμένων (proposed and put to vote) the decree. It leaves no doubt that the two verbs referred in Ephesus in that period to two different legislative procedures, none of them being decisive in the matter, since it was still the *demos* who consecrated (καθιέρωσαν) the statues, i.e. ratified the motion to set up the statues of the emperor Caracalla and Iulia Domna.⁵¹ It should also lie beyond doubt that the meaning of the word ψηφίζομαι in at least two major cities of Ionia already in the first c. AD must have been different than the original meaning. While we may be rather certain that Aelian was not familiar with the details of the legislative procedure in Athens, he might have had in mind the meaning of ψηφίζομαι attested in the Roman Asia, that is of *proposing a decree*.

To summarize, it seems to me that Aelian, by writing ὁ Δημάδης ἐψηφίσατο θεὸν τὸν Ἀλέξανδρον τρισκαίδεκατον, either meant i) that Demades made the decree pass to rhetorically recall the expressed wish of Alexander to vote the decrees to deify him, or ii) that Demades put a *psephisma* to vote to deify Alexander, just as the Ionian inscriptions suggest. In the second case, the result of the vote would not be obvious at the outset, but the next clause in Aelian's anecdote should have clarified it by describing how Demades was punished for his impious (and thus illegal) act.

If Alexander was indeed deified in Athens, one would expect to find information in the sources how the Athenians did change or revoke their former decree right after Alexander's death. Unfortunately, existence of such a procedure of abolishment of godly honours for Alexander is a scholarly inference based on the incidents that occurred after Alexander's death. In 322 the Eleusinian hierophant Eurymedon sought to bring Aristotle to trial on a charge of *asebeia*,⁵² and in 319 the anti-Macedonian Hagnonides of Pergase charged Theophrastus with *asebeia*.⁵³ In the citizenship decree for Ainetos of Rhodes, dated in 319/18 BC, right after Polyperchon had proclaimed the restoration of the *status quo* from before 323, the honorand was praised for "fighting nobly and honourably in a war along with the king Alexander in Asia".⁵⁴ There is no mention of any divine honours for Alexander in the inscription while this was perhaps the best opportunity to befriend the Macedonians, so there should rather be no doubt that there did not exist any cult of Alexander in Athens at the time of decree for Ainetos.

However, the question which should arise is whether there were no divine honours for Alexander in Athens *any more*, or no divine honours *at all*? In my opinion, the evidence on the existence of any cult of Alexander in Athens is insufficient. Except for Demades, all the leading Athenian politicians of the late fourth century BC seemed disgusted with the idea of divine honours for Alexander. And since Demades was soon punished for his impiety, the people must have objected the deification as well.

51 *Iephesos* 300.

52 D.L. V 5: Ὁ δ' οὖν Ἀριστοτέλης ἐλθὼν εἰς τὰς Ἀθήνας καὶ τρία πρὸς τοῖς δέκα τῆς σχολῆς ἀφηγησάμενος ἔτι ὑπεξῆλθεν εἰς Χαλκίδα, Εὐρυμέδοντος αὐτὸν τοῦ ἱεροφάντου δίκην ἀσεβείας γραψαμένον; see K. CLINTON, *Sacred Officials of the Eleusinian Mysteries*, Philadelphia 1974, 21; MIKALSON, *Religion* (n. 26), 48-49.

53 D.L. V 37: τοσοῦτον δ' ἀποδοχῆς ἤξιούτο παρ' Ἀθηναίοις, ὥσθ' Ἀγωνίδης τολμήσας ἀσεβείας αὐτὸν γράψασθαι μικροῦ καὶ προσώφλεν. See MIKALSON, *Religion* (n. 26), 49.

54 *SEG* 31.310, ll. 16-19: τε μετ' Ἀλεξάνδρου | το[ῦ βασιλέως εἰς τὴν Ἀσίαν διεπολέμησε τὸν πόλεμον καλῶς καὶ ἐνδ[όξως] | καὶ διὰ τὰς εὐερ<γ>εσι[ας]. Trans. by P.S. See I. KRALLI, "Athens and the Hellenistic Kings (338-261 B.C.): The Language of the Decrees", *CQ* 50 (2000), 115.

There is one more point to add. The evidence on Alexander's deification in Sparta is even more scanty than for Athens, since there exists only one passage of Plutarch's *Apophthegmata Laconica* where the king Damis is supposed to say: "Damis, with reference to the instructions sent from Alexander that they should pass a formal vote deifying him, said, 'We concede to Alexander that, if he so wishes, he may be called a god'".⁵⁵ This passage is so similar to Demosthenes' words cited by Hyperides⁵⁶ that the similarity cannot be simply accidental.⁵⁷ The problem requires further investigation, but one is fully entitled to ask if the words of Damis are not just a rephrased sarcasm of Demosthenes expressed in the *ekklesia* of 324? If that is the case, Alexander's deification in the whole mainland Greece could be put into question. And it would be also reasonable to reconsider the supposed optimistic attitude of the mainland Greeks who witnessed Alexander's sentiment towards the eastern culture. The meeting of the two worlds: the East and the West, ran perhaps not as smoothly as one would expect.

55 Plut. *Apophthegmata Laconica*, *Mor.* 219E: Δάμις πρὸς τὰ ἐπιστάλιντα περὶ τοῦ Ἀλέξανδρον θεὸν εἶναι ψηφίσασθαι, 'συγχωρῶμεν' ἔφη 'Ἀλεξάνδρῳ, ἂν θέλῃ, θεὸς καλεῖσθαι. Trans. by Babbitt (Loeb) 1931.

56 Hyp. V 31 – see note 9.

57 Cf. CAWKWELL, "Deification" (n. 1), 306.

On His Majesty's Secret Service – Actors at the Court of Alexander the Great

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Diplomatic undertakings, especially those of a delicate nature, are as a device for royal propaganda more effective the less evident and obvious they are. Both in antiquity and over the following centuries the ideal candidates for this type of problem were dramatic scenes – mobile even in times of unrest, adored and apparently independent. The aim of this article is to show how and under what circumstances Alexander made use of actors, both in diplomatic missions (e.g. Plu. *Alex.* 10) and in the construction of his own image, as well as in the boosting of his army's morale, especially during the eastern campaign (e.g. Ath. XII 54, XIII 68.11–20, Arr. *An.* V 3). Only scant references to or anecdotes concerning the king's relationship with the world of stage artists have survived until our time, but even these testify powerfully to his deliberate and skilful manipulation of society through the help of theatre and its people, who were even called Alexandrokolakes instead of Dionysokolakes, flatterers of a god, who had also conquered India...

Eminent actors and their artistic creations have repeatedly played an important political role in history. In addition, contemporary society sees the representation of almost every fundamental conflict, whether military or political, from both sides through the aid of artistic means of expression, especially in feature films both on television and in cinemas. The subconscious propagandistic effects of such productions are a valuable element of state politics. In ancient times there was a not dissimilar situation, of which an interesting example might be the role played by famous actors during the campaign of Alexander the Great.

In Macedonia the presence of artists' stages had longstanding traditions. The cultural aspirations of the Argeads had their own political dimension. The drive with which they tried in almost every generation to bring to Macedonia the best Greek artists, writers and orators, is testament to their perspicacity and far-reaching political plans. The consciousness of the propagandistic power of the theatre was foreign least of all to Archelaus, whose part in literary history was hosting Euripides at his court. Euripides wrote for him at least two tragedies, known to us as the *Bacchae* and the lost *Archelaus* – a work concerning the ancestors of the Argeads. Greek propaganda, as imposed upon the Macedonians, was surely a source about the tragic death of Euripides, who was said to have died mauled by the king's dogs.¹ It is not known which actors appeared in the plays written for Archelaus, whether local talent was employed or whether Athenian actors were brought in along with Euripides. Both possibilities are likely and are not particularly mutually

¹ On the legends about Euripides stay (and death) in Macedonia see S. SCULLION, "Euripides and Macedonia, or the Silence of the 'Frogs'", *CQ* 53 (2003), 389–400.

exclusive, if we bear in mind that Euripides was not the only tragedian to be invited to court by Archelaus. According to Plato, Agathon also spent time in Macedonia, and his stay there lasted at least a few years.² The theatre at Dion had already been built by the mid fifth century BC. The next stone theatre buildings were established at Aigai and Philippi in the second half of the fourth century BC.³ Also Philip II organised there many performances, with the single recorded appearance of Neoptolemus, a very well-known actor with an exceptional voice. During the wedding feast of Alexander of Epirus and Cleopatra, he intoned a song from a lost tragedy which told of the wealth, good fortune and death of the Persian King. On the following day, when Philip arranged a wonderful and lavish show entirely propagandistic in aim, he ordered his own image to be carried on a throne alongside those of the twelve gods. On the same day he was murdered by Pausanias.⁴ By inviting eminent actors to Macedonia Philip guaranteed for himself not only some high-class entertainment, but also simultaneously demonstrated his interests and cultural worldliness, as well as his concern for the prestige of organised performances. He also showed off the splendour of his court. We might conjecture that he also made use of famous actors on diplomatic missions. The same can be said about Alexander; we will return to this later. The presence of actors in Macedonian royal circles was therefore something completely natural.

We are also able to state without hesitation that Alexander was a great connoisseur of the theatre. He was not only a pupil of Aristotle, but he also spent part of his youth in Aigai where he indubitably watched (in the above mentioned theatre) both contemporary drama productions and restaged plays of fifth century dramatists, including those of Euripides. Ancient sources attest that he would willingly recite from memory drama passages but that he also liked to have in his possession copies of plays presumably for private study.⁵ It is on record that he was an admirer of Homer's (*a philohomeros*), and his Aristotelian edition *Iliad of the Casket* is famous. However, according to ancient testimonies,⁶ he cited nobody as frequently as he did Euripides (of course, at least some of these citations seem to Alexander's biographers to be mostly appropriate to the events related, so it is in fact difficult to establish which of these passages were really cited by him). However, there is no doubt that he had a consummate knowledge of the classic works of drama. More importantly, as we will see later, he was well aware of the great sociological dimension and propagandistic potential of performances.

2 Pl. *Smp.* 172c, R. 568a–b.

3 On the dating of the theatre in Dion see: C. SAMIOU and G. ANTHANASIADES, “Αρχαιολογικές και αναστηλωτικές εργασίες στο θέατρο των Φιλιππών”, *Αρχαιολογικό Έργο στη Μακεδονία και στη Θράκη* 1: 353–362 and St. Drougou, “Das antike Theater von Vergina”, *MDAI(A)* 112 (1997), 281–305 Taf. 37–41.

4 D.S. XVI 91.4 – 93.3

5 Plu. *Alex.* 8.3: “Ἀρπαλον ἐκέλευσε πέμψαι, κάκεϊνος ἔπεμψεν αὐτῷ ... καὶ τῶν Εὐριπίδου καὶ Σοφοκλέους καὶ Αἰσχύλου τραγῳδιῶν συγχνάς” “[Alexander] ordered Harpalus to send [books]. So Harpalus sent him (...) a lot of the tragedies of Euripides, Sophocles and Aeschylus”.

6 E.g. Arr. *An.* VII 16.6; Plu. *Alex.* 53.2 (from *Medea*), *Alex.* 53.4 (from *Bacchae*); Callisth. *FGrH* 124 T 2b F 7 and F12c. Alexander's reaction on Cleitos quoting one line from Euripides' *Andromache* proves his knowledge of the whole passage (Plu. *Alex.* 51= Curt. VIII 1.28).

The majority of both ancient and modern biographers of Alexander deemed the cultural events and performances organised by him either insignificant or not deserving of record. Arrian mentions them as if in passing, summing up in one sentence the entire event, which sometimes lasted for several days.⁷ Curtius Rufus hardly mentions episodes of this type at all. Only Plutarch, writing about Alexander not so much as a military leader but rather as a king and man, demonstrated sufficient interest in and understanding of the propagandistic element of the performances. He also states (*Alex.* 4.11) that Alexander “instituted many contests, not only for tragic poets and aulos players and cithara players, but also for rhapsodists, as well as for hunting of every sort and for fighting with foils.”⁸

Arrian certifies in total 14 gymnastic and musical contests.⁹ This was the simplest way of organising mass entertainment. The most skilled soldiers took an active part in the competitions. The agenda for the festivities was usually traditional: public sacrifices, a race with torches or other athletic and musical contests. During Alexander's campaign dramatic competitions took place far less frequently; in contrast with previous performances, not only was greater financial expenditure required, but most of all preparation time. The occasion could not be arranged on an *ad hoc* basis, since the actors and choristers had to learn the texts and choreography by heart. Yet despite this, Alexander decided under these particular circumstances to fund great theatrical spectacles for his army. If we look closely at the calendar of events in the work of Arrian, we see clearly that his account passes over the usual theatrical performances. This is the case, for example, in the instance of the spectacles arranged in Tyre. Arrian relates only that (*An.* III 6.1):

ταῦθα ἦκον ἐν Τύρῳ δὲ αὖθις θύει τῷ Ἡρακλεῖ καὶ ἀγῶνα ποιεῖ γυμνικόν τε καὶ μουσικόν “In Tyre he again offered sacrifice to Heracles, and organized a gymnastic and musical contest”.

Meanwhile the performances which took place in Phoenicia were spectacular and absolutely essential to royal propaganda – Plutarch narrates (*Alex.* 29.1–6):

Εἰς δὲ Φοινίκην ἐπανελθὼν ἐξ Αἰγύπτου, θυσίας τοῖς θεοῖς καὶ πομπὰς ἐπετέλει καὶ χορῶν [ἐγ]κυκλίων καὶ τραγικῶν ἀγῶνας, οὐ μόνον ταῖς παρασκευαῖς, ἀλλὰ καὶ ταῖς ἀμύλλαις λαμπροὺς γενομένους. ἐχορήγουν γὰρ οἱ βασιλεῖς τῶν Κυπρίων, ὥσπερ Ἀθήνησιν οἱ κληρούμενοι κατὰ φυλάς, καὶ ἡγωνίζοντο θαυμαστῇ φιλοτιμίᾳ πρὸς ἀλλήλους. μάλιστα δὲ Νικοκρέων ὁ Σαλαμίνιος καὶ Πασικράτης ὁ Σόλιος διεφιλονίκησαν. οὗτοι γὰρ ἔλαχον τοῖς ἐνδοξοτάτοις ὑποκριταῖς χορηγεῖν, Πασικράτης μὲν Ἀθηνόδωρῳ, Νικοκρέων δὲ Θεσσαλῷ, περὶ ὃν ἐσπουδάκει καὶ αὐτὸς Ἀλέξανδρος. οὐ μὴν διέφηνε τὴν σπουδὴν πρότερον ἢ ταῖς ψήφοις ἀναγορευθῆναι νικῶντα τὸν Ἀθηνόδωρον. τότε δ' ὥς ἔοικεν ἀπὼν ἔφη τοὺς μὲν κριτὰς ἐπαινεῖν, αὐτὸς μέντοι μέρος ἂν ἡδέως προέσθαι τῆς βασιλείας ἐπὶ τῷ μὴ Θεσσαλὸν ἰδεῖν νενικημένον. ἐπεὶ δ' Ἀθηνόδωρος ὑπὸ τῶν Ἀθηναίων ζημιωθεὶς, ὅτι πρὸς τὸν ἀγῶνα τῶν Διονυσίων οὐκ ἀπήντησεν, ἡξίου γράψαι περὶ αὐτοῦ τὸν

7 E.g. most typical phrase: “καὶ ἀγῶνα ποιεῖ γυμνικόν τε καὶ μουσικόν”, see the list below.

8 Plu. *Alex.* 4.11: πλείστους γέ τοι θεῖς ἀγῶνας οὐ μόνον τραγῶδων καὶ αὐλητῶν καὶ κιθαρωδῶν, ἀλλὰ καὶ ῥαψωδῶν θήρας τε παντοδαπῆς καὶ ῥαβδομαχίας.

9 Gymnastic and musical contests : *An.* II 5.6; II 24.6; III 1.4; III 5.2; III 6.1; III 16.9; III 25.1; VI 28.3, VII 14.10; gymnastic and equestrian contests: IV 4.1; V 3.1; V 8.3; V 20.1; V 29.2.

βασιλέα, τοῦτο μὲν οὐκ ἐποίησε, τὴν δὲ ζημίαν ἀπέστειλε παρ' ἑαυτοῦ. Λύκωνος δὲ τοῦ Σκαρφέως εὐήμεροῦντος ἐν τῷ θεάτρῳ καὶ στίχον εἰς τὴν κωμῳδίαν ἐμβαλόντος αἴτησιν περιέχοντα δέκα τάλαντων, γέλασας ἔδωκε.

“When he had returned from Egypt into Phoenicia, he honoured the gods with sacrifices and solemn processions, and held contests of dithyrambic choruses and tragedies which were made brilliant, not only by their furnishings, but also by the competitors who exhibited them. For the kings of Cyprus were the choregi, or exhibitors, just like, at Athens, those chosen by lot from the tribes, and they competed against each other with amazing ambition. Most eager of all was the contention between Nicocreon of Salamis and Pasistrates of Soli. For the lot assigned to these exhibitors the most celebrated actors, to Pasistrates Athenodorus, and to Nicocreon Thessalus, in whose success Alexander himself was interested. He did not reveal this interest, however, until, by the votes of the judges, Athenodorus had been proclaimed victor. But then, as it would appear, on leaving the theatre, he said that he approved the decision of the judges, but would gladly have given up a part of his kingdom rather than to have seen Thessalus vanquished. And yet, when Athenodorus, who had been fined by the Athenians for not keeping his engagement in the dramatic contest of their Dionysiac festival, asked the king to write a letter to them in his behalf, though he would not do this, he sent them the amount of the fine from his own purse. Furthermore, when Lycon of Scarpheia, who was acting successfully before Alexander, inserted into the comedy a verse containing a request for ten talents, Alexander laughed and gave them to him”. (trans. B. Perrin, Loeb)

From the perspective of theatre history these events in Tyre played an unusual part. Firstly, Alexander made Cypriot kings *choregoi* of the performances. At the same time he not only lightened his own royal purse, but also brought about a bitter rivalry between Nicocreon and Pasistrates. The organisation of the performances was as it was during the Athenian Dionysia. The main actors were chosen at random by the *choregoi*. Thessalus and Athenodorus were two of the most eminent actors of the time. However, it appears that Athenodorus stood out in terms of fame and talent, and his appearances were at that same time eagerly anticipated in Athens. In addition, the fact that he did not honour his commitments in the capital city of drama is well established. Athenodorus, like Thessalus accompanied Alexander during his conquests. Both their names further appear in the organisation of subsequent performances, several thousand kilometres from Tyre.¹⁰ The king prevented this same Athenodorus from participating in the Athenian Dionysia, not only ensuring some splendid entertainment for himself, but also demonstrating that any performances organised by him were either equal or superior to those put on in Athens. It is also important to note that despite Athenodorus' request Alexander did not write a letter to the Athenians excusing Athenodorus' absence. Instead he preferred to pay a fine on his behalf. He did not intend to apologise for detaining the actor, whom he wanted at his disposal for the following years. So the question arises why he preferred Thessalus to win, and whether Alexander's choice was dictated exclusively by his aesthetic and artistic views. The king's despair at the defeat of his favourite seems to be genuine. For Alexander owed a

¹⁰ Plut. *Alex.* 29.1–6

great deal to Thessalus. Before he even became king, he employed the actor in the execution of an essential and – as it later turned out – dangerous and unwise mission – Plu. *Alex.* 10.1–4.¹¹

Ἐπεὶ δὲ Πιξώδαρος ὁ Καρίας σατράπης, ὑποδύμενος δι' οἰκειότητος εἰς τὴν Φιλίππου συμμαχίαν, ἐβούλετο τὴν πρεσβυτάτην τῶν θυγατέρων Ἀρριδαίῳ τῷ Φιλίππου γυναῖκα δοῦναι καὶ περὶ τούτων Ἀριστόκριτον εἰς Μακεδονίαν ἀπέστειλεν, αὐθις ἐγίνοντο λόγοι καὶ διαβολαὶ παρὰ τῶν φίλων καὶ τῆς μητρὸς πρὸς Ἀλέξανδρον, ὡς Ἀρριδαῖον ἐπὶ τῇ βασιλείᾳ Φιλίππου γάμοις λαμπροῖς καὶ πράγμασι μεγάλοις εἰσοικειοῦντος. ὕφ' ὧν διαταραχθεὶς πέμπει Θεσσαλὸν εἰς Καρίαν τὸν τῶν τραγωδιῶν ὑποκριτὴν, Πιξωδάρῳ διαλεξόμενον ὡς χρὴ τὸν νόθον ἐάσαντα καὶ οὐ φρενήρῃ μεθαρμόσασθαι τὸ κῆδος εἰς Ἀλέξανδρον. καὶ Πιξωδάρῳ μὲν οὐ παρὰ μικρὸν ἤρεσκε ταῦτα τῶν προτέρων μᾶλλον· ὁ δὲ Φίλιππος αἰσθόμενος † ὄντα τὸν Ἀλέξανδρον εἰς τὸ δωμάτιον, παραλαβὼν τῶν φίλων αὐτοῦ καὶ συνήθων ἓνα Φιλώταν τὸν Παρμενίωνος, ἐπετίμησεν ἰσχυρῶς καὶ πικρῶς ἐλοιδόρησεν ὡς ἀγεννῇ καὶ τῶν ὑπαρχόντων περὶ αὐτὸν ἀγαθῶν ἀνάξιον, εἰ Καρὸς ἀνθρώπου καὶ βαρβάρῳ βασιλεῖ δουλεύοντος ἀγαπᾷ γαμβρὸς γενέσθαι. τὸν δὲ Θεσσαλὸν ἔγραψε Κορινθίοις ὅπως ἀναπέμψωσιν ἐν πέδαις δεδεμένον, τῶν δ' ἄλλων ἐταίρων Ἀρπαλον καὶ Νέαρχον, ἔτι δ' Ἐρίγιον καὶ Πτολεμαῖον ἐκ Μακεδονίας μετέστησεν, οὓς ὕστερον Ἀλέξανδρος καταγαγὼν ἐν ταῖς μεγίσταις ἔσχε τιμαῖς.

“But when Pixodarus, the satrap of Caria, trying by means of a tie of relationship to steal into a military alliance with Philip, wished to give his eldest daughter in marriage to Arrhidaeus the son of Philip, and sent Aristocritus to Macedonia on this errand, once more slanderous stories kept coming to Alexander from his friends and his mother, who said that Philip, by means of a brilliant marriage and a great connexion, was trying to settle the kingdom upon Arrhidaeus. Greatly disturbed by these stories, Alexander sent Thessalus, the tragic actor, to Caria, to argue with Pixodarus that he ought to ignore the bastard brother, who was also a fool, and make Alexander his connection by marriage. And this plan was vastly more pleasing to Pixodarus than the former. But Philip, becoming aware of this, went to Alexander's chamber, taking with him one of Alexander's friends and companions, Philotas the son of Parmenio, and upbraided his son severely, and bitterly reviled him as ignoble and unworthy of his high estate, in that he desired to become the son-in-law of a man who was a Carian and a slave to a barbarian king. And as for Thessalus, Philip wrote to the Corinthians that they should send him back to Macedonia in chains. Moreover, of the other companions of Alexander, he banished from Macedonia Harpalus and Nearchus, as well as Erigyius and Ptolemy, men whom Alexander afterwards recalled and had in the highest honours”. (trans. B. Perrin, Loeb)

So Alexander took advantage of Thessalus in the undertaking of a diplomatic mission which was very important for the young prince (and his mother, Olympias). However,

¹¹ Similar Str. XIV 2.17.

Philip took this in a different way and treated the actor as a traitor and spy. Thessalus' task was essentially not only confidential but also political and unsafe. His profession and fame were in theory meant to guarantee him immunity,¹² but the mission ended in fiasco and the artist paid for this with his own freedom. Thessalus, managed on some pretext to get himself from Caria to Corinth, where he was arrested, most probably on the basis of a charge of treason, and was handed over to Philip. We might suppose that such a punishment was obviously dictated by the actor's fame; somebody less well-known and talented would have paid for an intrigue of this kind with his life. However, it did not befit Philip to put to death an artist. It is sufficient to consider the fact of the exile of the descendants of the leading Macedonian families: Harpalus and Nearchus, Erygius and Ptolemy. To compensate for this distress and humiliation, Alexander then awarded them the highest honours and military and administrative positions, among other privileges. After taking power, Alexander had not only to rehabilitate his actor – spy-diplomat, but also to accommodate him in his palace for good. If we must really place the scandal of Pixodarus in the year 337 BC,¹³ then the actor spent not just a few months in prison, as can be concluded from Plutarch's narrative, but over a year. And it is precisely through this indebtedness, which the king nurtured, that we can interpret his sincere disappointment at Thessalus' defeat. However, the actor remained in the king's service throughout the following years and we meet him again during one of the most important events of the Eastern campaign.

Arrian at least once denies the occurrence of events which definitely took place. This is true of the famous Dionysia organised in Carmania. Arrian writes that he does not believe what others have written before him, and that Alexander travelled through the territory of Carmania on two joined wagons to the sound of flutes (*An.* VI 28).¹⁴ Staging of this type would have been indeed strange during a military procession. Aristobulos,¹⁵ however, states that artistic and gymnastic contests did take place there, a fact also backed up by Plutarch.¹⁶ It is possible that the procession on the wagons, written about by authors who had been named by Arrian, occurred during festival celebrations, and were part of the festivities in honour of Dionysus – staging which was prepared for the opening of the competitions. Arrian notes that (*An.* VI 28.1-2):¹⁷

12 It is worth noting that in the later period numerous inscriptions concern granting freedom of travel and immunity from hostile actions to *technitai* (actors, poets, musicians – members of the religious and professional guilds of Dionysus). On the political, economical and social conditions of *technitai* as well as their immunity see P. GHIRON-BISTAGNE, *Recherches sur les acteurs dans la Grèce antique*, Paris 1976, 173–191, S. ANEZIRI, *Die Vereine der Dionysischen Techniten im Kontext der hellenistischen Gesellschaft*, Munich 2003, 243–259 and S. ANEZIRI, "World Travellers: The Associations of Artists of Dionysus", in: R. Hunter and I. Rutherford (eds.), *Wandering Poets in Ancient Greek Culture: Travel, Locality and Pan-Hellenism*, Cambridge/New York 2009, 217–236 with further bibliography.

13 K. NAWOTKA, *Alexander the Great*, Newcastle-upon-Tyne 2010, 117.

14 Arrian adds that he takes this parade to be incredible because neither Ptolemy nor Aristobulos wrote about it.

15 Arr. *An.* VI 28.2.

16 Plu. *Alex.* 67.8.

17 Similar Plu. *Mor.* 332 B: καὶ Περσέα ζηλῶ, καὶ τὰ Διονύσου μετιῶν ἔχνη, θεοῦ γενάρχου καὶ προπάτορος, βούλομαι πάλιν ἐν Ἰνδῇ νικῶντας Ἑλλήνας ἐγχορεῦσαι καὶ τοὺς ὑπὲρ Καύκασον ὀρεῖους

καὶ ταῦτα πρὸς μίμησιν τῆς Διονύσου βακχείας ἀπεικάσθη Ἀλεξάνδρῳ, ὅτι καὶ ὑπὲρ ἐκείνου λόγος ἐλέγετο καταστρεψάμενον Ἰνδοὺς Διόνυσον οὕτω τὴν πολλὴν τῆς Ἀσίας ἐπελθεῖν,

“Alexander intended to follow in the footsteps of Dionysus, who, as legend has it, travelled in this way through most of Asia after the conquest of India”.

As we have demonstrated earlier, Philip had in a similar manner his image paraded in a theatrical context together with those of the Olympian gods. In Carmania Alexander played the part of Dionysus in the company of artists, perhaps even in the framework of celebrations for the mysteries, but there appears to have been no staging of either comedy or tragedy at this point. These events took place in 325 BC. In the next year there took place two great festivals, during which theatrical spectacles were also organised. More well-known are events in Ecbatana, since they were the indirect cause of the deaths of two people. Ancient writers agree in telling of the circumstances of Hephaistion's death, which occurred as a result of the absence of the doctor treating him.¹⁸ This doctor, named Glaucus, went off to the theatre and for this unfortunate absence from Hephaistion's sick-bed he paid with his life. The tragedy which was taking place at the time of these events overshadowed the festivities themselves. Incidentally, these were supposed to be, in fact, the greatest spectacles ever witnessed in history.

A master of theatrical propaganda, and one which is known to us from the title of a performance put on during Alexander's campaign, was the *Agen*. This work concerned the scandal of Harpalus and was a satyr drama quite unusual in form. Athenaeus (XIII 50 and XIII 68) quotes only two fragments, which surely come from the play's prologue.¹⁹ The eponymous *Agen* is obviously Alexander, who also had to be one of the play's heroes. His

καὶ ἀγρίους τῶν βακχικῶν κόμων ἀναμνησαί. (“and follow in the footsteps of Dionysus, the divine author and progenitor of my family, and desire that victorious Greeks should dance again in India and revive the memory of the Bacchic revels among the savage mountain tribes beyond the Caucasus”). (trans. F.C. Babbitt, Loeb).

18 Arr. An. VII 14.1, D.S. XVII 110.8, Plu. Alex. 72.1–2.

19 Python's *Agen* (TrGF 91) F1: ἔστιν δ' ὅπου μὲν ὁ κάλαμος πέφυχ' ὅδε / † φέτωμ' ἄορνον. οὐξ ἀριστερᾶς δ' ὅδε/ πόρνης ὁ κλεινὸς ναός, ὃν δὴ Παλλίδης / τεύξας κατέγνω διὰ τὸ πρᾶγμ' αὐτοῦ φυγὴν./ ἐνταῦθα δὴ τῶν βαρβάρων τινὲς μάγοι / ὁρῶντες αὐτὸν παγκάκως διακείμενον / ἔπεισαν ὥς ἄξουσιν τὴν ψυχὴν ἄνω τὴν Πυθιονίκης (“This is where the reed grows, and here is a rock, inaccessible to birds, while on the left the famous temple of the whore, which Pallides / built and on this account condemned himself to exile. Here several barbarian magi, seeing his terrible predicament, persuaded him that they would summon up/ the soul of Pythionice from the dead”) F2: <A.> (...) ἐκμαθεῖν δέ σου ποθῶ / μακρὰν ἀποικῶν κείθεν, Ἀτθίδα χθόνα / τίνες τύχαι καλοῦσιν ἢ πράττουσι τί. / <B.> ὅτε μὲν ἔφρασκον δοῦλον ἐκτῆσθαι βίον/ ἱκανὸν ἐδείκνουν· νῦν δὲ τὸν χέδροπα μόνον / καὶ τὸν μάραθον ἐσθουσι, πυροὺς δ' οὐ μάλα. / <A.> καὶ μὴν ἀκούω μυριάδας τὸν Ἄρπαλον / αὐτοῖσι τῶν Ἀγῆνος οὐκ ἐλάσσονας / σίτου διαπέμψαι καὶ πολίτην γεγονέναι. / <B.> Γλυκέρας ὁ σῖτος οὗτος ἦν· ἔσται δ' ἴσως / αὐτοῖσιν ὀλέθρου κοῦχ' ἐταίρας ἄρραβῶν. (A.: “I wish to learn from you, since I am faraway from this place, the fortunes of Attica, what are they saying and doing?/ B.: They say that when they sold themselves to slavery/ they feasted, and now they eat only peas / with fennel, and no wheat bread whatsoever. / A.: But they say Harpalus sent them abundance/ of corn, no less than Agen, and that he became a citizen./ B.: This grain was for Glycera, but it will be/ a deposit for their downfall, not for the heterae”). On the play in the literary context see: A. KOTLIŃSKA-TOMA, *Hellenistic Tragedy: Texts, Translations and a Critical Survey*, London/New York/New Deli 2015, 113–123 with further bibliography.

antagonist, as appears from the fragments, was Harpalus. He had been a friend and companion of the king from his very youth, and was one of those men whom Philip, out of their loyalty to his son, exiled from Macedonia during the Pixadoros' affair. We might say that Alexander displayed exceptional weakness in the face of Harpalus. Right at the beginning of his campaign he appointed him the manager of the king's treasury, a position of trust soon abused by Harpalus, who then in the year 333 BC had to flee to Megara. The king forgave his old friend, and two years after the first scandal he again trusted him with the public purse. During the years of his campaign he also tolerated Harpalus' uncommon extravagance, and even his dignitary's distasteful lifestyle. It is sufficient to state that throughout these years Harpalus kept his mistresses Pythionice and later Glycera lavishly and in enormous splendour, which was a reason for frequent malicious reports, especially in Athens.²⁰

Over the next few years at least three Athenian comic playwrights made a mockery of this relationship in their works. In the *Agon* the situation is reversed. Harpalus embezzled the public purse, convinced that the king would never return from India. When Alexander began his retreat, punishing on his journey those satraps who were disbelievers, Harpalus had to flee with the remainder of the stolen money. With these funds he set up for himself a private army, and, counting on the help of the Athenians, who were always hostile to Alexander, he managed to make his way to their city. But at first the Athenians refused to help him; however, after a certain period and for political reasons they received him into their city. In brief, it is understood that in a rash move they arrested Harpalus, who despite this was able to escape to Crete. There he was killed by one of his mercenary officers. From the preserved fragment 2 we can deduce that the work was performed either before Athens' official refusal to receive the fugitive Harpalus, perhaps during the negotiations, or soon after his acceptance into the city; but in any event before his arrest. It appears from the supposition expressed by one of the characters in the drama – that the grain which Harpalus had at some point sent to the Athenians, would be an advance payment for their future loss (definitely if they helped the traitor).

In a certain sense Alexander was helpless in the face of Harpalus' scandal. He did not have any way of recovering the stolen treasure or any instant way of meting out punishment to the wicked man. This surely shattered his image and was, perhaps, a cause of the mockery directed at him by his soldiers. In these conditions the ridicule of Harpalus and the trivialisation of the problem could be the only propagandistic tool available. Now it was not the Athenian comic playwrights who mocked the dignitary and his lovers. We must note here that after Pythionice's death Harpalus lived openly with another famous Athenian concubine, Glycera. Alexander's court took the initiative and with the aid of stage art planned to put on a performance of the official version of events, and show that Harpalus and his army ought in no way to be taken as any sort of threat to the king. It is interesting to

20 Ath. XIII 50; D.S. XVII 108.4–6; Plu. *Phoc.* 22; Curt. X 1.45; Paus. I 37.5. See also S. MÜLLER, "Alexander, Harpalos und die Ehren für Pythionike und Glykera: Überlegungen zu den Repräsentationsformen des Schatzmeisters in Babylon und Tarsos", in: V. Lica (ed.), *Philia. Festschrift für Gerhard Wirth zum 80. Geburtstag am 9. Dezember 2006 von seinen Schülern, Freunden und Kollegen dargebracht*, Galati 2006, 71–106 with further bibliography.

note Athenaeus' assertion that the author of the play was Python from Catana (or Byzantium) or King Alexander himself:

Ath. II 35: ὅτι Ἀγῆνα σατυρικόν τι δρᾶμα ἀμφιβάλλεται εἴτε Πύθων ἐποίησεν ὁ Καταναῖος ἢ Βυζάντιος ἢ καὶ αὐτὸς ὁ βασιλεὺς Ἀλέξανδρος.

“Concerning Agen, the small satyr play, it is disputed whether the author is Python of Catana or Byzantium, or King Alexander himself”.

Ath. XIII 50: ὁ δὲ γράψας τὸν Ἀγῆνα τὸ σατυρικὸν δραμάτιον, εἴτε Πύθων ἐστὶν ὁ Καταναῖος ἢ αὐτὸς ὁ βασιλεὺς Ἀλέξανδρος

“The one who had written the small satyr play Agen, (whether it was Python of Catana or King Alexander himself)”

The likelihood that the king himself wrote the play is small; however, it could have been his idea originally, or, as Wikarjak supposed – he was the *choregos*.²¹ The author was most probably Python from Catana, a well-known orator in the court of Philip II. The two extant fragments clearly show that the aim of the work was to mock and ridicule Harpalus. In this context it is very important to establish when the work was first performed. This is the subject of heated debate among scholars. Snell considered the relevant date to be the year 326 BC, by the river Hydaspes,²² since Athenaeus writes:

Ath. XIII 68: συνεπιμαρτυρεῖ δὲ τούτοις καὶ ὁ τὸν Ἀγῆνα τὸ σατυρικὸν δραμάτιον γεγραφώς, ὅπερ ἐδίδαξεν Διονυσίων ὄντων ἐπὶ τοῦ Ὑδάσπου [τοῦ] ποταμοῦ, εἴτε Πύθων ἢ ὁ Καταναῖος ἢ [ὁ] Βυζάντιος ἢ καὶ αὐτὸς ὁ βασιλεὺς. ἐδιδάχθη δὲ τὸ δρᾶμα ἤδη φυγόντος τοῦ Ἀρπάλου ἐπὶ θάλατταν καὶ ἀποστάντος. καὶ τῆς μὲν Πυθιονίκης ὡς τεθνηκυίας μέμνηται, τῆς δὲ Γλυκέρας ὡς οὔσης παρ' αὐτῷ καὶ τοῖς Ἀθηναίοις αἰτίας γινομένης τοῦ δωρεᾶς λαμβάνειν παρὰ Ἀρπάλου,

“And this is also testified by the one who had written the satyr play Agen, which was staged during the Dionysia celebrated at the banks of Hydaspes river, whether the author was Python of Catana or Byzantium, or King Alexander himself. The drama was staged when Harpalus was already fleeing to the sea after his revolt. And it mentions Pythionice as being already dead and Glycera as being with him [i.e. Harpalus], and as being the reason for the Athenians' receiving of Harpalus' gifts”.

From a chronological perspective Snell's dating is improbable. The events in this play concern the famous ‘Harpalus affair’, which did not begin until 325 BC and therefore chronologically could not have been the subject of a play in 326 BC, before it actually happened. Moreover, Arrian writes only about music and gymnastic contests (*An.* V 29.2), but does not mention any dramatic *agones* being held in the camp on the Hydaspes. Beloch and Körte therefore date the premiere to have occurred in October 324 BC and the venue to have been Ecbatana.²³ C.W. Blackwell, in turn, believes it happened towards the end of

21 J. WIKARJAK, “Na marginesie dramatu satyrowego *Agen*”, *Eos* 44 (1950), 41–55.

22 B. SNELL, *Szenen aus griechischen Dramen*, Berlin 1971, 121

23 K.J. BELOCH, *Griechische Geschichte*, IV: *Die griechische Weltherrschaft*, Berlin/Leipzig 1927², 435; A. KÖRTE, “Der Harpalische Prozess”, *Neue Jahrbücher für das klassische Altertum* 53 (1924), 217–231, 220.

325 BC.²⁴ P. Goukowsky believes it was the winter of 325 or early 324, during the Dionysia in Carmania, arguing that Athenaeus' Hydaspes was actually the river Halil-rud.²⁵ An interesting version of events is presented in an article by J. Wikarjak, who posits that the play was first performed in 324 BC, during the weddings in Susa, on the river Choaspes (Karkheh river).²⁶ Wikarjak here explains that in the Greek manuscript this river's initial letters XO could easily be mistaken for those of Hydaspes, ΥΔ.²⁷ This thesis can be supported further by other evidence. The weddings took place in March, and as a result in calendar terms fell more or less during the period of the Great Dionysia in Athens. So perhaps Athenaeus' original source noted the fact that during the long wedding celebrations stage performances were also put on, just as they were in the birthplace of drama. What is true is that the main extant sources (Plutarch, Arrian and Curtius) are silent on the topic of theatrical entertainment; however, we should not be surprised at this: these kinds of events were neither shocking nor more outrageous, in contrast with the very idea of mixed marriages with Iranian brides or the generous gifts bestowed on the guests. Athenaeus himself reports elsewhere on the performances. During the course of five days artists' appearances took place with the participation of musicians (soloists and choristers) and also declaimers (Ath. XII 54):

ὑπεκρίθησαν δὲ τραγῳδοὶ μὲν Θεσσαλὸς καὶ Ἀθηνόδωρος καὶ Ἀριστόκριτος, κωμῳδοὶ δὲ Λύκων καὶ Φορμίων καὶ Ἀρίστων. παρῆν δὲ καὶ Φασίμηλος ὁ ψάλτης. οἱ δὲ πεμφθέντες, φησί, στέφανοι ὑπὸ τῶν πρεσβευτῶν καὶ τῶν λοιπῶν ταλάντων ἦσαν μυρίων πεντακισχιλίων.'

"Performing in addition were the tragic actors Thessalus and Athenodorus and Aristocritus, whereas Lycon, Phormion and Ariston were the comedy performers; and also present was Phasimelos, a harp-player. And he says that the ambassadors and remaining participants funded the garlands (for the victors) for the price of 15,000 talents".

Athenaeus names only the famous actors and therefore the protagonists of the works. So it was not one play which was performed, but three tragedies and/or three comedies (three protagonists mean at least three plays). He also clearly tells of the competitions which took place and the funded prizes. As a result we are actually dealing with a substitute or in

24 C.W. BLACKWELL, *In the Absence of Alexander: Harpalus and the Failure of Macedonian Authority*, New York 1999, 143.

25 P. GOUKOWSKY, *Essai sur les origines du mythe d'Alexandre (336–270 av. J.–C.)*, I: *Les origines politiques*, Nancy 1978, 65–77.

26 The first to propose this version was Droysen (J.G. DROYSEN, *Geschichte des Hellenismus*, I: *Geschichte Alexanders des Großen*, Gotha 1877, 244), but on account of Beloch's criticism this theory was not accepted.

27 WIKARJAK, "Na marginesie" (n. 12), 49. Not only could this be the reason for the confusion. As B. SNELL (*Szenen* (n. 13), 121 n. 43) notes, ancient authors frequently confused Choaspes and Hydaspes, which might even by the reason why Virgil refers to a river called Hydaspes Medus (*Georg.* VI 211, and Petronius 123, 239). Beloch's theory – supported by SUTTON (*The Greek Satyr Play*, Meinesheim am Glan 1980, 78) – that this was a river upon which lay Ecbatana, is difficult to support. This city lies at the height of above 1800 metres, and mountain rivers which flow in the valley of Hamadan are in the main seasonal, and in early autumn are virtually streams.

addition some particular form of Dionysiac festival. We can conclude that just after these three tragedies the *Agen* was performed. This seems to be the most convincing explanation in terms of the chronology of events and the technical possibilities of staging a new play, but above all because it is entirely consistent with both of Athenaeus' testimonies.

We again meet here the most distinguished actors of the age: Thessalus and Athenodorus. It is very probable that Alexander's favourite tragic actor merited the opportunity to play the role of the king on stage and this was exactly how he immersed himself in the role of the *Agen*'s main character. And this time again Alexander arranged financial backing for the performances through wealthy and influential members of the audience. The sum mentioned by Athenaeus seems to be so fantastical that it must just be improbable. If, however, these theatrical events really went alongside the most lavish mass wedding ceremony in history, then such prizes for the troops of court actors could be a reality.

The aim of the work, as we have already stated, was doubtless the discrediting of Harpalus. From the two extant fragments we can think of only a few ways of doing this, with the help of which the play's author achieved his intention. Firstly, and perhaps fundamentally, was the discrediting of Harpalus as a husband, a Greek and a man. In the play he goes to ask for help from Chaldean magi, who offer to bring Pythonice back to life and conjure up her spirit. This fact alone shows him to be a naive type who makes use of the services of charlatans, and foreign ones at that. We might ask ourselves, to what end do the magi want to conjure up Pythonice's spirit? This must obviously have some comical or satirical overtone. It was certainly a feature which could still further demean Harpalus in the eyes of his army. Perhaps the intention was to show him as a man unfit to make sensible (or indeed any kind of) decisions without consulting his mistress, which in an overt way mocked and undermined him as a leader and politician. It is also possible that Pythonice, newly risen from the dead, was meant to comfort Harpalus in another, more obscene way – an element characteristic of old Greek comedy and other burlesque-miming acts. However, whatever the reason for Pythonice's recall back to life, it is important that Harpalus is presented surely as a man dependent on and addicted to her presence. In this way his presentation is emasculating.

Similarly to Alexander as *Agen*, Harpalus does not make his appearance only under his own name, but also as *Pallides*. Research has shown that this moniker derives from various sources and is equally variously interpreted. Sutton suggested that it was connected to Athene's appellation of *Pallas*, and that it was to be interpreted as a reference to the Athenian citizenship of Harpalus, which he received when he made a gift of grain to Athens during a period of famine.²⁸ A. Meineke and W. Süß suggested that the name had an obscene connotation as it sounds similar to the Greek word *φαλλός*.²⁹ Bearing in mind that Harpalus was famous for his kept women such a joke cannot be ruled out and it is probably not without reason that the word *Pallides* is also reminiscent of the Greek word *παλλακίς*, which means mistress.

28 D.F. Sutton, "Harpalus as Pallides", *RhM* 123 (1980), 96.

29 W. Süß, "Zum Satyrdrama *Agen*", *Hermes* 74 (1939), 216. The very first person to propose such an amendment to the text was A. MEINEKE, *Analecta critica ad Athenaei Deipnosophistas*, Leipzig 1867, 280.

Here it is necessary to return briefly to the play's exact dating. I stated earlier that the performances took place in March of 324 BC in Susa. Let us retrace briefly to Beloch's theory – which is also now accepted by Sutton – that the *Agen* was put on in the autumn of the same year in Ecbatana. In reality, as is attested by Plutarch, theatrical performances were put on there in succession, and as many as 3000 actors were brought on from Greece for the occasion (*Alex.* 72). Do these few months have any significance for the performance of the play? From the perspective of the drama quite possibly not; but from a political one – without a doubt. Sutton focuses on explaining the political and propagandistic significance of the play precisely in the year 324 BC, and on refuting the theory of Lloyd-Jones – that the *Agen* was a work in the manner of a modern music-hall comedian's jibes at the fall of a minister, and an innocent piece of fun. In actual fact, this satyr play was significantly more than this – it was not only essential as the official version of events but also an attempt to discredit Harpalus and to lighten the general mood.³⁰ In the spring of 324 BC Alexander's relationship with his army was markedly tenser than it was a few months later at Ecbatana. Suffice to say that during the summer, a few months after the weddings in Susa, a famous mutiny took place in Opis (*Arr. An.* VIII.6–7). However, more important is the fact that in Susa itself things had reached the point of the king making an unexpected move. He decided to pay off the debts of all his soldiers, but according to various authors³¹ they reached from nearly 10 to 20,000 talents. We might wonder where this sudden generosity on the part of the king came from, since it was received with disbelief and mistrust even by the creditors (they did not want to enrol on the lists for payment, believing that Alexander wanted to check which of them was living above his means).³² The immediate incentive for settling the army's claims was its anxiety about the state of the public purse after the escape of Harpalus. The mockery directed at the latter through the performance of the *Agen* and the unheard-of organisation of the extravagant weddings in Susa, and in addition the settlement of the soldiers' debts, proved that the episode of the embezzlement of the public purse meant nothing, and that Alexander would always have enough money both during his military campaign and in the lavish lifestyle led by both him and his army, even with his current taxes. Therefore, the performance of the *Agen* in the spring and not the autumn was precisely and from the perspective of Alexander's propaganda a necessity. A few months after the suppression of the rebellion at Opis, at Ecbatana, Alexander's relationship with his army was no longer so strained.

Let us remind ourselves now of Arrian's assertion that during his retreat Alexander wanted to follow in the footsteps of Dionysus. Bacchus is frequently a hero of Greek dramatic works, both tragedy and comedy; most frequently, however, of satyr plays. Similarly, this introduces another mythical hero who was beloved by Alexander –

30 Here it must be noted that the dissemination of the official version in its early form and its stance towards Harpalus was publicised in the denunciation letter of Theopompus (*Ath.* XIII 50= *FGrH* 115 F 254) on the subject of Harpalus' ostentatious lifestyle and his relationship with the concubines Pythionice and Glycera. This letter did not have to be a direct source for the author of the *Agen* (so SNELL, *Szenen* (n. 13), 123–124), since the information contained in it was in the year 324 already commonly known, as is shown by the references in the comedies of Alexis and Philemon.

31 *Arr. An.* VII 5.3 (who attests 20,000 talents), the same amount of money: *Just.* XII 11.3, *D.S.* XVII 109 and *Curt.* X 8.9; *Plu. Alex.* 70 attests only 9870 talents.

32 See NAWOTKA, *Alexander* (n. 9), 347.

Heracles.³³ He appears in satyr play as a conqueror of bad and stupid dunces, monsters and cruel people. It is not known if any of these mythical characters appeared on the stage, and similarly we do not know whether satyrs and Sileni also took part. Nonetheless, however, the casting of Agen – Alexander himself – in the role of antagonist of the ribald and foolish Pallides-Harpalus puts the former on a par in the drama with the heroic Heracles or indeed the very god Dionysus. The propagandistic power of this performance cannot be equalled. A pamphlet or different form of royal publication requires time to permeate through society. A play could be shown instantly to a large number of soldiers all at the same time, and the ascription of the main roles to the most famous actors must in addition have encouraged a favourable reception. We might suggest that at the end of the play Pallides-Harpalus is justly if brutally punished (by beating or even by death). The action finished with a happy ending and lifted the spirits of the assembled spectators. We cannot say that the artistic endeavours in the play were clearly some type of brutal and heavyweight propaganda. The obscene vocabulary and unambiguous allusions evident in the preserved fragment are not only typical of the bacchic world and wedding celebrations, but are also classic 'army barracks' humour.

We can posit that this play, like all those put on during the campaign, was intended in addition to relax the tension in Alexander's army. And it is precisely for this aim above all that he paid at least several famous actors for their permanent presence at his court during military operations. The actors became for him a quasi-neutral medium between the army leaders and the soldiers at large. Thanks to them Alexander was able not only to calm the atmosphere in the army through the spectacles, but also, as is evident, to present propagandistic works and also display his own cultural enthusiasm, and – what is also important – his generosity.

33 Cf. D.L. VII 173.

The Metamorphoses of Pseudo-Callisthenes' Motifs Concerning India in the Persian Alexander Romances¹

Aleksandra Szalc (Wrocław)

The *Alexander Romance*, a fictional biography of Alexander of Macedon made an extraordinary career all over Europe and Asia. The lost Greek archetype of which we have only one manuscript (*Historia Alexandri Magni (Pseudo-Callisthenes)*, I: *Recensio vetusta, edidit Guilelmus Kroll*, Berlin 1926), was translated into Latin, Armenian, Coptic and Syriac. The *Romance* was very popular in Medieval Europe and also influenced Sasanian Persia, where it was first translated most probably from the Syriac seventh c. recension.²

Alexander, called the "great" in Greece, in Achaemenid Persia was called *gizistag* or 'accursed' by the Zoroastrians,³ not only did he bring to the end the Achaemenid dynasty but also he is said to have burned the sacred books, killed magi and destroyed fire temples. The Pahlavi literature is hostile towards "wicked, wretched, heretic, sinful, maleficent Alexander the Roman".⁴ Moreover, this hostile view of Alexander was cultivated also for political reasons. The founder of the Sasanian dynasty, Ardashir I (180-242 AD) presented himself as a successor of Achaemenid dynasty and made Zoroastrianism the official religion of Iran, thus restoring the legacy of Achaemenid Persia, destroyed by Alexander.⁵ In a kind of Iranian National History (*X^aday-namag*), "The Book of Lords" (from the period of Khusrau I, 531-579 AD.). Alexander kills the last Kayanid king Dārā, along with aristoc-

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- 1 This article is a result of my research stay in Oxford, funded by the Ministry of Science and Higher Education (Iuventus Plus grant).
 - 2 There is still a controversy whether the Syriac version was translated directly from the Greek version or there was a Pahlavi intermediary. See: T. NÖLDEKE, *Beiträge zur Geschichte des Alexanderromans*, Vienna 1890; F. PFISTER, "Studien zum Alexanderroman", *WJA* 1 (1946), 42-44, C.A. CIANCAGLINI, "Gli antecedenti del Romanzo siriano di Alessandro", in: R.B. Finazzi and A. Valvo (eds.), *La diffusione dell'eredità classica nell'età tardoantica e medioevale: Il "Romanzo di Alessandro" e altri scritti. Atti del Seminario internazionale di studio, Roma-Napoli, 25-27 settembre 1997*, Alessandria 1998, 55-93, R.N. FRYE, "Two Iranian Notes" in: H.W. Bailey, A.D.H. Bivar, J. Duchesne-Guillemin and J.R. Hinnells (eds.), *Papers in Honour of Professor Mary Boyce*, I, Leiden 1985, 185-190.
 - 3 J. ROSE, *Zoroastrianism: An Introduction*, London 2011, 63. See also: A.S. SHAHBASI, "On the X^aday-namag" in: D. Amin, M. Kasheff and A.Sh. Shahbazi (eds.) *Iranica Varia: Papers in Honor of Prof. Ehsan Yarshater*, Leiden 1990, 208-229; E. FEUILLEBOIS-PIERUNEK, *Les figures d'Alexandre en littérature persane: entre assimilation, moralisation et ironie*, <http://hal.archives-ouvertes.fr/hal-00652065>, 1-13; Y. YAMANAKA, "From Evil Destroyer to Islamic Hero: The transformation of Alexander the Great's Image in Iran", *Annals of Japan Association for Middle East Studies* 8 (1993), 65-70; A.M. PIEMONTESE, "La figura di Alessandro nelle literature d'area islamica", in: *Alessandro Magno storia e mito*, Milan 1995, 177-183.
 - 4 F. VAHMAN, *Arđā Virāz Nāmāg: The Iranian 'Divina Commedia'*, London 1986, 191; 224. On Alexander see H6 P.1, Introduction: In the Name of God, 77.
 - 5 YAMANAKA, "From evil" (n. 3), 65-70

racy, priest and scholars. He destroys the fire temples and extinguishes the holy fire.⁶ The other Pahlavi texts which describe Alexander as the wrecker of the Zoroastrian tradition are: *Ardāy Wirāz Nāmag* (The Book of Ardā Wīrāz) (1. 1-7), the *Greater Bundahišn* (the compilation of cosmogony and cosmography of the Zoroastrianism) (33. 14; 36. 8-9), The *Dēnkard* ("The Acts of Religion", a summary of knowledge of the Mazdean religion) (3.420).⁷ The *Zand-i Wahman Yasn* 3.26 (the Zoroastrian apocalypse, sixth c. AD) contain a bit different account; Alexander is here mentioned as a Christian who had interfered in the Zoroastrian religion along with the Buddhists ("idol-worshippers").⁸ The other account dated for the sixth c. AD, The *Letter of Tansar*, contains a passage where Alexander is said to have burnt "the books of our religion—1200 ox-hides—at Istaxr".⁹

In contrast to the Pahlavi texts, national epic tradition shows him in a favourable light. Written after the Arab conquest, but not fully Islamicised, the epic *Shahnameh*, which contains Alexander's story as it is presented in the *Alexander Romance*, make him an adventurous warrior, a prophet, a propagator of Islam and a philosopher travelling around the world. Alexander promises to uphold Avesta and the Zand, he "shall always hold in his fist these Avesta and Zand (Exegesis)".¹⁰ Was it the spread of the *Alexander Romance* and its reception that made Persian poets describe Alexander as a legitimate son or a relative of Darius (Dārā) in the Persian Romances? In the Greek *Alexander Romance* he was made a son of Egyptian Pharaoh and the Arabic associated him with good Dhū al-Qarnayn,¹¹ so it was to the purpose to make him a son of Darius, and thus a Persian national in the Persian Romances.¹² Already, the Persian ninth c. historian al-Dīnawarī makes Alexander the elder half-brother of Darius and therefore the legitimate heir to the Persian throne.¹³

The Persian romances are based on the lost δ* recension of the Pseudo-Callisthenes and its most important translation: Syriac version.¹⁴ It was translated into Latin in tenth c. AD, by Leo the Archpresbyter of Naples, this translation has become the source and inspiration for various European translations. In the East, until recently it has been believed that the

6 J. WIESEHÖFER, "The 'accursed' and the 'adventurer'" in: Z.D. Zuwiyya (ed.), *A Companion to Alexander Literature in the Middle Ages*, Leiden/Boston 2011, 120

7 See: P. GIGNOUX, "Ardā Wīrāz", in: *Encyclopaedia Iranica*, II, 4, 356-357; D.N. MACKENZIE, "Bundahišn", in: *Encyclopaedia Iranica*, IV, 5, 547-551; P. GIGNOUX, "Dēnkard", in: *Encyclopaedia Iranica*, VII, 3, 284-289; W. SUNDERMANN, "Bahman Yašt", in: *Encyclopaedia Iranica*, III, 5, 492-493; K. EDDY, *The King is Dead: Studies in the Near Eastern Resistance to Hellenism 334-31 B.C.*, Lincoln 1961, 12-19; D.-T. IONESCU, "Alexander the Great in the Persian legends: From Alexander of Macedon to Sikandar: The Circulation of Mythical Topoi between the Greek Alexander Romance and Firdousi's Shah-Nameh", *Chaos e Kosmos* 14 (2013), (www.chaosekosmos.it), 4-5

8 F.M. KOTWAL and P.G. KREYENBROEK, "Alexander the Great ii. In Zoroastrian Tradition", in: *Encyclopaedia Iranica*, Online Edition, 1982.

9 M. BOYCE, *The letter of Tansar*, Rome 1968, 37.

10 M.R. SHAYEGAN, *Arsacids and Sasanians: Political Ideology in Post-Hellenic and Late Antique Persia*, Cambridge, 2011, 301.

11 SHAYEGAN, *Arsacids* (n. 10), 303-304.

12 P.J. CHELKOWSKI, "Nizāmī's Iskandarnāme", in: *Colloquio sul Poeta Persiano Nizāmī e la leggenda iranica di Alessandro Magno (Roma, 25-26 marzo 1975)*, Rome 1977, 18.

13 CHELKOWSKI, "Nizāmī's" (n. 12), 19; M. GAILLARD, *Alexandre le Grand en Iran. Le Darab Nameh d'Abu Taher Tarsusi*, Paris 2005, 14.

14 R. STONEMAN, *Alexander the Great: A Life in Legend*, New Haven/London, 2008, 30; WIESEHÖFER, "'accursed'" (n. 6), 114.

Middle Persian (Pahlavi) translation was the source of the Syriac, Persian, Arabic and Ethiopian versions of the *Alexander Romance* postulated by T. Nöldeke, and recently supported by D. Weber.¹⁵ However there is a strong evidence that the Syriac version of the *Romance* may have been translated directly from the Greek δ^* recension.¹⁶

It is possible that Greek tales become known to the Persians during the rule of the Sasanian king Khusrau I Anushirvan (Khusrau the Immortal Soul, 531-579 AD). The king was interested in Greek learning and philosophy. Agathias (*Histories*, II 13) informs us that Khusrau gave refuge to the Athenian philosopher Damascius and his companions, following the closure of the philosophical school in Athens (AD 529). There was also a medical school opened in Gundeshapur in the fifth c. by Nestorian refugees from Byzantium. Also, a compendium of Aristotle's philosophy was written at that time as well as Indian tales from *Kalila wa Dimna* (*Pañcatantra*) was translated into Persian.¹⁷

The Persian poetical writings varies greatly from its primordial source, the Greek *Alexander Romance* of Ps.-Callisthenes. The accounts on India, the main subject of this article are different and reveal an Islamic influence. For the purpose of this work I have chosen major literary pieces in poetry as well as in prose.¹⁸ They are: Ferdowsi's *Shāhnāme* (977-1010 AD),¹⁹ *Iskandarnāme* of Nizami Ganjavi (c. 1200 AD),²⁰ Amir Khosrow's *Āinahāi-Sikandarī* (*Mirror of Alexander*, 1299 AD)²¹ and Jami's account of Alexander (*Khīradnāmāh-yi Iskandari*, *The Book of Alexander's Wisdom*, 1485 AD).²² The accounts of the latter two contain little information about India but the analysis would be incomplete without mention of those two writers²³ The writings in prose are: *Dārābnāme* of Tarsusi (XI-XII)²⁴ and Anonymous *Iskandarnāme* (XII-XIV).²⁵

15 D. WEBER, "Ein Pahlavi-Fragment des Alexanderromans aus Ägypten?", in: D. Durkin-Meisterernst, Ch. Reck and D. Weber (eds.), *Literarische Stoffe und ihre Gestaltung in mitteliranischer Zeit. Kolloquium anlässlich des 70. Geburtstages von Werner Sundermann*, 30-31 März 2006, Wiesbaden 2009, 307-319.

16 FRYE, "Two Iranian" (n. 2), 185-188; CIANCAGLINI, "Gli antecedenti" (n. 2), 55-93; E.A. W. BUDGE, *The History of Alexander the Great being the Syriac Version of the Pseudo Callisthenes, Edited from Five Manuscripts with an English Translation and notes*, by Ernest A. Wallis Budge, Cambridge 1889, 121-140.

17 STONEMAN, *Alexander* (n. 14), 31; GAILLARD, *Alexandre* (n. 13), 15.

18 For more information on later Persian Alexander Romances, see: FEUILLEBOIS-PIERUNEK, "Figures" (n.3), 4; YAMANAKA, "From Evil" (n. 3), 70-78.

19 D. KHALEGHI-MOTLAGH, "Ferdowsi, Abu'l – Qāsem i. Life", in: *Encyclopaedia Iranica Online*.

20 CHELKOWSKI, "Nizāmī's" (n. 12), 15-16.

21 GAILLARD, *Alexandre* (n. 13), 72.

22 GAILLARD, *Alexandre* (n. 13), 73.

23 Unfortunately the *Khīradnāmāh-yi Iskandari* was not translated to any of the Modern languages.

24 GAILLARD, *Alexandre* (n. 13), 9.

25 M. SOUTHGATE, *Iskandarnamah: A Persian Medieval Alexander Romance*, New York, 1978, 2. For further information see: J. HANAWAY, "Alexander and Iranian Identity" in: D. Amin, M. Kasheff and A. Sh. Shahbazi (eds.), *Iranica* (n. 3), 93-103; W.L. HANAWAY, "Eskandar-Nāma", in: *Encyclopaedia Iranica*, VIII, 609-612; A.J. MANGO, *Studies on the Legend of Iskandar in the Classical Literature of Islamic Persia, with Special Reference to the Work of Firdausi, Nizami and Jami*, unpublished dissertation, London 1955; A. ABEL, "La figure d'Alexandre en Iran" in: A. Montaverdi (ed.), *Atti del convegno sul tema: La Persia e il mondo Greco-Romano (Roma 11-14 Aprile 1965)*, Rome 1966, 119-136.

First, I will briefly present Alexander's stay in India as preserved in the most ancient, Greek recension, the archetype (α) called frequently the A recension (III 1- 24).

Alexander, after he had defeated Darius, corresponds with the Indian king Poros. Both kings are brave and unwilling to settle and end up on the battle field. Alexander wins and treats Poros in a royal way with dignity and leaves him as a king of conquered territories. Alexander marches forward to India, spends night near to sweet water and fights with fierce animals; various uncommon animals, composite creatures and a monster called *odontotyrannos* attack him. Those adventures are described in the "Alexander's letter to Aristotle about India". Surviving this "night of terror", he speaks to Indian naked philosophers putting witty and difficult questions to them. Indians show him oracular trees which predicts his soon death in Babylon. Then, he visits the kingdom of Candace. The queen lives in the palace, carved from one stone, ornamented with figures of terrifying, barbarian gods, which resembles ancient Indian, monolith temples. He also meets there Sesonchosis, who dwells in a cave temple, which, in my opinion, is also inspired by Indian landscape, rich in such cave temples and monasteries build for Buddhist monks, as early as from the reign of the famous Mauryan king Aśoka (304-232 BC).

There are many real Indian elements preserved in the *Romance*, not only in the Indian part of the story but also in episode of Alexander's meeting with queen Candace of Meroe. During the "night of terror" (III 17) Alexander is attacked by the composite creatures and various strange animals. The same composite creatures (for example: a composite "bull-elephant") are depicted in Indian Art (the surviving artefacts start from II c. BC); As a matter of fact, this may be the evidence that the *Alexander Romance* contains some traces of authentic knowledge on India. Moreover, Candace's kingdom bears such Indian elements like cave temples, pepper trees or richly ornamented palaces carved from single stone,²⁶ and Alexander's dialogue with Indian philosophers which not only contains some authentic elements of Indian thought, but also this kind of philosophical riddle is highly popular in the Indian literature.²⁷ This sort of riddle dialogues can be found not only in the Indian epics but also in some very ancient philosophical literature like the *Upanishads* or even the *Vedas*.²⁸ To say more, the land of the *gymnosophistai* and their lifestyle described in the *Romance* resembles closely the lifestyle of real Indian sages, living outside the cities.

The Book of Kings, written by Ferdowsi, provides the story of the Iranian empire from the creation of the world to the Arab conquest. Written in the early eleventh c. it covers the reigns of fifty kings and queens, including the reign of Darius and Alexander who succeeded him. Alexander is here presented both in positive and negative ways.²⁹ Naturally,

26 A. SZALC, "Kandake, Meroe and India – India and the Alexander Romance", in: V. Grieb, K. Nawotka and A. Wojciechowska (eds.), *Alexander the Great and Egypt: History, Art, Tradition*, Wiesbaden 2014, 357-370.

27 G. DUMÉZIL, "Alexandre et le sages de l'Inde", in: R. Gendre (ed.), *Scritti in onore di Giuliano Bonfante*, II, Brescia 1976, 555-560. See also: A. SZALC, "Alexander's dialogue with Indian philosophers in: riddle in Indian and Greek tradition", *Eos* 98 (2011), 7-25.

28 D. BHAGAWAT, *The Riddle in Indian Life, Lore and Literature*, Bombay 1965, 4-19; SZALC, "Alexander's" (n. 27), 7-25.

29 WIESEHÖFER, "accursed" (n. 6), 114; D. DAVIS, *Shahnameh: The Persian Book of Kings*, New York, 2006, 468-469, 538-539; ABEL, "Figure" (n. 25), 126-129; SOUTHGATE, *Iskandarnamah* (n. 25), 186-189; C. KAPPLER, "Alexandre dans le Shāh Nama de Firdousi: De la conquête du monde à la découverte

the Alexander story is covered in some Islamized material, but still the story remains close to the original *Alexander Romance*, moreover this text is the closest one to Pseudo-Callisthenes of all Persian *Alexander Romances*. Sekandar (Alexander) is the son of Filicus, and the philosopher Arestālis the Sage becomes a teacher of the young prince. Alexander visits Darius as his own envoy and then fights him in the battle. Dying Dara makes Alexander the king of Iran, gives him his daughter Rowshanak and orders him to restore the fire of Zorosater and elevate the Avesta and Zand. Ferdowsi most probably used the Syriac version of the *Romance*, which has more episodes than the Greek, for example Alexander's visit to China and his fight with a dragon.³⁰ Despite changed circumstances, Sekandar goes to India, as in the Greek recensions, he exchanges letters with Indian King Kayd (possibly Taxiles). Here the differences start. Following the advice of his counsellor, Kayd offers Sekandar four gifts: his beautiful daughter, the philosopher "who knows all the world's secrets", the physician "who is renowned for his skill", and a goblet that could never be emptied "whether by fire or the sun, or when someone drinks from it." For Alexander it was filled with wine, what seems to be the perfect gift. When Kayd's beautiful daughter was sent to her rooms, Sekandar decided to check the intelligence of the philosopher. Alexander putting Indian philosophers in riddle contest is one of the most famous *Alexander Romance* episodes. Here, the situation looks different (Alexander is not threatening the philosopher) but the meaning of this test is the same. The king wants to examine the knowledge and skills of the philosopher.

"He (Sekandar) sent him a large goblet filled with cow's fat, saying he should rub all his trunk and limbs with it, until his fatigue was quite gone, and then he could come and fill Sekandar's soul and mind with knowledge. But the philosopher looked at the fat and said, "I'm not fooled by this ploy," and he poured a thousand needles into the goblet and sent it back to the king. Sekandar looked at the needles and then had blacksmiths melt them down and make an iron disk from them, which he sent to the philosopher. He in turn looked at the disk and rubbed it for a while, until he transformed the dark metal into a bright mirror. This was taken to Sekandar at night, who kept his own counsel. He placed the mirror outside, so that the dew turned it black, then he sent it back to the philosopher, and so the duel of wits continued. The sage for his part polished the metal again, making it bright as water, and sent it back to the king, but this time smeared an unguent on it, so that the humidity wouldn't quickly turn it black again. Sekandar summoned him and had him seated below the throne. He questioned him, beginning with the goblet of fat, to see if the philosopher had understood what was meant. The sage said to the king, "Fat penetrates deep into the body, and you were saying that your knowledge goes deeper than that of any philosopher. In answer I said, 'O king, the hearts of wise men are like needles than can penetrate feet and bones and split stones open.' You in turn asked, 'How can the subtle arguments of a wise man penetrate a heart that's been darkened by feasting, warfare, bloodshed, and constant fighting against enemies?' And I replied, 'My wise

de soi", in: M. Bridges and J. Ch. Bürgel (eds.), *The Problematics of Power: Eastern and Western Representations of Alexander the Great*, Bern 1996, 165-190; GAILLARD, *Alexandre* (n. 13), 17-19.

30 STONEMAN, *Alexander* (n. 14), 30.

soul and heart knows secrets subtler than a hair, but your heart is not darker than iron.' You said that in the passing of years your heart had rusted with spilled blood, and how was it possible for this to be righted, and for you to frame words in such darkness? I answered that I would work on your heart with divine knowledge, until it became as bright as water and certain of truth". (D. Davies' transl., 479-480).

Sekandar, pleased with this answer, offered philosopher some gifts. He said:

"I have a hidden jewel that brings me whatever I wish and provokes no enemies, and unlike wealth, does not bring Ahriman in its train. It has no guards to demand a salary from me, and I fear no bandits when I'm travelling. Wisdom, knowledge, and righteousness are what's needed. And going astray from these will lead a man to knock at ruin's door. Lord of all that is visible and invisible can provide me with sufficient food and clothing; knowledge is my guardian at night, and wisdom is the crown of my active soul. Why would I rejoice in more than this and worry about guarding such wealth? Tell your servants to take this things somewhere else, and may my wisdom be my soul's guide."

Sekandar was pleased with the philosopher's clever answer and offered him gifts, as in the Greek *Romance*. When all the philosophers answered the questions, Alexander impressed with their wisdom asked them, what they want, but they wanted something he couldn't give them, that is immortality. Also, Dandamis, chief of the gymnosophists in the Greek *Romance*, when offered gifts, replied, that they don't need anything, because the nature provides them with everything (β III 6). When Alexander tests a physician, he tells the king, that a healthy man eats less, and does not sleep with women; this fragment also includes some Indian spirit, I will discuss it in case of the *Book of Dārāb*. There is a goblet left to test. One of the philosophers explains Alexander, that the goblet works like a magnet, and Kayd had gathered astrologers from all around the world to create that goblet. It can be curious to note, that Indians are considered to have used magnetism in surgery in the sixth c. BC (in China, it is the fourth c. BC), so this information may reflect an authentic knowledge of science and crafts in India. During the battle with Indian king Fur (Poros), Alexander uses trick (the same as in the Greek *Romance*); his army construct the iron horses, then covered with oil and set on fire to battle Indian elephants.

Shahnameh also contains the Brahmins episode. After the encounter with queen Qaydah (Candace), here, the queen of Andalusia, Alexander goes to the Land of Brahmins, similarly as in the Greek *Romance* they bravely approach him and say that there is nothing he can take from them, because they possess nothing, but the scenery looks different. In the *Shahnameh*, Brahmins descend from the "white mountains"; In my belief, the possible interpretation is that the mountains are the Himalayas, where, according to Indian tradition, holy and white (sinless) men lived.³¹ They offer wisdom to Sekandar, as they know that he possess the world. This passage corresponds to the Greek *Romance*, where naked philosophers write Alexander a letter telling him that they have nothing he could take from them.

31 *Aitareya Brāhmaṇa*, VIII 14, 3, *Mahābhārata* VI 7, 2-14, See more: W.E. CLARK, "Sakadvipa and Svetadvipa", *JAOS* 39, 1919, 209-242.

In the Greek recensions of the *Alexander Romance*, the king asks the gymnosophists a few riddle-like, short questions. In Ferdowsi's account Alexander is more like a philosopher himself, asking more complicated questions and getting meaningful answers. He goes to the meeting accompanied by the group of 'Greek philosophers', that means he is more friendly than in the Greek *Romance*. He asks only three philosophical questions: "Who is the king of our souls? Who always accompanies us towards evil?" The response is: "Greed is the king, the ground of vengeance and the place of sin". The next question is "What is the reality of this thing that makes us weep with longing?" and the answer:

"Greed and need are two demons, wretched and malevolent; one is dry-lipped from longing, the other passes sleepless nights from excess. Time passing hunts down both, and blessed is the man whose mind accepts wisdom."

The same as in the Greek *Alexander Romance*, Brahmins ask Sekandar to "close the door of death and old age" and he replies that that he cannot give them immortality and they all must agree with the will of God. As in the Greek *Romance*, they do not accept any gifts from the king. The content of this short dialogue may not raise particular interest, unless one reads the subsequent episode, where Sekandar meets talking trees. Unlike in the Greek *Romances*, they are not in India but in undefined place, near India. Before the trees predict coming death of the king in Babylon, they lecture him about greed. The female tree says:

"Do not puff yourself up with greed; why torment your soul this way? Greed makes you wander the wide world, harass mankind, and kill kings. But you are not long for this earth now; do not darken, and deaden your days like this."

Sekandar also sees a big island-fish, in the land of people dressed in "colourful, splendid, clothes" and talk in an unknown language. In the Greek *Romance* this island was used as a trap by Indians, but Alexander was saved by his friends. Moreover, this people veiled in colourful clothes brings to mind Indian or at least Oriental landscape.

The *Iskandarnamah* of Nizami is divided into two parts: *Sharafnameh* (Book of Honour),³² and *Ikbāl-nāmeḥ* (Book of Fortune) or *Khiraḍ-nāmeḥ* (Book of Wisdom). The first part covers the life and adventures of Alexander, and the second one treats him as a prophet and philosopher.³³ Both parts are known in India as *Iskandarnāmeḥ-i Barrī* (The Adventures of Alexander by Land) and *Iskandarnāmeḥ-i Bahrī* (The Adventures of Alexander by Sea).³⁴ The poet's main source and inspiration was Ferdowsi's great epic.³⁵

The tale follows the *Romance* story with minor changes: Alexander as a baby is found by Philip in the desert as a newborn baby lying beside a dead woman. Philip takes the baby to his palace and give him the name, Alexander. The boy is raised by Nicomachus, the father of Aristotle, himself Alexander's classmate. When Alexander succeed his father, his first great achievement is to fight the Zangis in Egypt. He gives a horrifying spectacle of

32 Nizami also refers to the Alexander as a king who extinguished the sacred fire and destroyed the fire temples, see: H.W. CLARKE, *Sikandar nāma, e barā or Book of Alexander the Great*, London 1881, 382-392.

33 ABEL, "Figure" (n. 25), 129-134.

34 CHELKOWSKI, "Nizāmī's" (n. 12), 14.

35 CHELKOWSKI, "Nizāmī's" (n. 12), 21.

eating one of the Zangis' head. He refuses also to pay the tribute in the golden eggs to Darius and starts war with him, after the exchange of provocative gifts.³⁶ During the bloody war, two treacherous officers come to Alexander and propose to kill Darius. When the king dies on Alexander's lap he begs him to treat the royal members of his family well, to marry his daughter Rhoxane and to ensure the continuity of his line. In Persepolis he receives the crown and envoys "from the source of the Nile and Ganges." Alexander establishes monotheistic religion (Islam) and destroys ancient fire-temples. Then he starts his journey around the world: he goes to Arabia, to the holy city of Mecca, Yemen and Iraq. He visits queen of the virgins, Nushabeh (Candace) in Armenia and she uses trick to reveal his identity as in the Pseudo-Callisthenes' *Romance*. Alexander wants to measure the size of the earth and is accompanied by holy men and philosophers. He besieges the great fortress behind the Alborz pass and wins it with the help of a holy man. He seats on the throne of Kay Khosrow and sees the whole world in the Jamshīd goblet. Then he goes to India. Indian king, Kayd offers him his daughter to marry and gives him a goblet made of a single ruby "a drinking-cup of pure ruby, by which wine, by drinking, becomes not less" (trans. H. Wilberforce Clarke), as well as the famous astronomer-philosopher and a physician. Apart of that, so much treasure that forty elephants carry it on their backs. Next, Alexander kills Fur (Poros) and goes to Tibet or Kashmir, according to the translator's note. What is interesting, the romance here adds authentic information about the production of musk and saffron in Kashmir. Through this land, Alexander reaches China, and "feel no more desire for Hindustan". Then he goes to China (and wins the contest with Chinese painter thus inventing the famous mirror of Alexander), fights with Russians, goes to the Land of Darkness in search for the fountain of life. Unfortunately he is not able to drink the miraculous water (his companion, the prophet Khidr does) and disappointed, he returns to Greece.³⁷

In the *Ikbāl-nāmah* Alexander is presented as a philosopher. He converses with Aristotle, Thales, Socrates, Porphyry, Hermes and Plato,³⁸ Indian sages and Apollonius of Tyana. Aristotle, Socrates, Plato, Hermes, Apollonius, Porphyry and Thales, were the group of seven philosophers gathered all the time around Alexander's throne.³⁹ This unexpected presence of various Greek characters is due to the fact that in the ninth c. many stories from ancient and Hellenistic times were brought into Islamic literature, without the sense of chronology.⁴⁰ The book starts with Alexander's organization of great library, gathering together famous scholars to prepare the translations of book he had collected from all over the world. He offers a great patronage to scholars, philosophers and artisans. He is a pious

36 Darius sends Alexander a polo mallet, a ball and a handful of sesame seeds, implying that Alexander is still a child and should play the ball and that Darius' army is numerable as the sesame seeds. For Alexander that meant that he will rule the world (a ball) and the sesame seeds were easily eaten by the birds. In the response the Macedonian king send to Darius a handful o mustard seeds as they are hard to masticate.

37 Summary followed by: CHELKOWSKI, "Nizāmī's" (n. 12), 26-39., and CLARKE, *Sikandar nāma* (n. 32), 570. For the unique translation of both books of Nizami see: J.CH. BÜRGEL, Nizami. *Das Alexanderbuch. Iskandarnāme*. Übertagung aus dem Persischen, Nachwort und Anmerkungen von J.CH. BÜRGEL, Zürich 1991.

38 STONEMAN, *Alexander* (n. 14), 37.

39 BÜRGEL, *Alexanderbuch* (n. 37), 459-461.

40 CHELKOWSKI, "Nizāmī's" (n. 12), 24.

ruler encircled by orators, philosophers, hermits and prophets. He treats the peoples of the conquered countries equally and respects their religion, language and culture.⁴¹ In addition to the Midas-Alexander story and various short stories related to Greek philosophers, Alexander converses with Indian philosophers.⁴² What is curious to notice is that the Greek philosophers become ascetics "gaining insight through exercising the powers of self-control. They also eschewed physical pleasures such as wine-drinking and love-making, knowing that these were purely corporal pastime and inhabited the acquisition of wisdom. By abstinence and the fruitful utilization of time the sages broadened their learning to the point where they were able to penetrate the universe's most mysterious secrets."⁴³

The Sun-worshippers (philosophers) visit Alexander and they ask him eight questions rather philosophical questions: the first one is about the search for God, where should one find "the Creator", the second concerns the finites of the sky, third is about the two worlds (the world of life and the world of praise). The fourth question concerns the nature of the human soul, and Alexander gives the answer that soul is immortal. The subjects of other questions are dreams, the nature of evil, the prophecies and even the colour of the Chinese and Black people's skin.

In the *Iqbāl-nāmeḥ* Alexander also visits Kandahar, where he sees the Buddhist temple with a statue of Buddha with two precious gems as eyes and made entirely of gold. He wants to destroy it as he did with Zoroastrian temples but he is prevented from doing so by the young girl, who tells him a story of the golden statue. It was placed in the place of reconciliation of two opposite cities, and the eyes of the statue were made from two jewels thrown by the two birds.⁴⁴ This description can be without a doubt connected with India; The statues of Buddha covered in gold can still be seen in India (for example the most famous Buddhist shrine in Bodhgaja (Bihar).

Nizami's fine poem found two very great imitators: Amīr Khusrow of Delhi (fourteenth c.) and Jāmī (fifteenth c.). Āinahāi-Sikandarī (*The Mirror of Alexander*)⁴⁵ is the fourth poem of the Amir Khusrow replica of Nizami's *Khamsa*.⁴⁶ He is a *Wali*, a friend of God⁴⁷ In the tale Alexander battles the Khaqan of China and marries his daughter. From the East, he turns towards the north and subjugates Rusis and Almanis. Then he travels to the land of Yajuj (Gog and Magog) and supervises the construction of a great wall made of copper, iron, lead and stone.⁴⁸

41 T. MAHARRAMOV, "Khamsas of Nizami and Ameer Khusrau", in: Z. Ansari (ed.), *Life, Times and Works of Amir Khusrau Dehlavi*, New Delhi 1975, 115.

42 BÜRGE, *Alexanderbuch* (n. 37), 451-456.

43 CHELKOWSKI, "Nizāmī's" (n. 12), 46.

44 J.CH. BÜRGE, "Conquérant, philosophie et prophète. L' image d'Alexandre le Grand dans l'épopée de Nizāmī", in: C. Balay, C. Kappler and Z. Vesel (eds.), *Pand-o-Sokhtan. Mélanges offerts à Charles-Henri de Fouchécour*, Teheran 1995, 73.

45 On Persian "Mirrors for Princes" see: A.K.S. LAMBTON, "Islamic Mirrors for Princes", in: *Atti del convegno internazionale sul tema: La Persia nel Medioevo (Roma, 31 marzo-5 aprile 1970)*, Rome 1971, 419-442.

46 M. BILQUIS, *Monograph on a Critical and Comparative Study of Amir Khusrau's Aina-I-Iskanderi*, Rampur 2004, 1-43.

47 BILQUIS, *Monograph* (n. 46), 61.

48 M.W. MIRZA, *The Life and Works of Amir Khusru*, Lahore 1962, 200-201. See also: S. SHARMA, *Amir Khusraw: the poet of Sultans and Sufis*, Oxford 2005.

Despite his Indian nationality, Amir Khusrow was careful in describing India in the romance.

“An important point is that Amir Khusrow, though very fond of introducing Indian elements in his poem, unusually refrains from speaking about India and its specialties. It is, perhaps, because he must have rightly thought that a poem dealing with Alexander’s episodes reference to Indian element would not fit in. However, at one place he has mentioned the fully of drinking water with both hands joined together in preference over any cup or tumbler. One case of smile of an Indian elephant with forehead besmeared with vermilion is available in this poem”.⁴⁹

Khusrow briefly describes Alexander’s campaign in India: He wins over a very rich Kayd and takes Indian elephants with him “in the country of Poros”. He sees peacocks and goes to hunt for a musk deer. Then he goes from India to China, which is the main place of Alexander’s Asian adventures in the Mirror.⁵⁰ There is also a mention, that the Garden of Eden is located close to the Mekran.⁵¹ What is curious to notice, Alexander visits Plato, considered to be one of the wisest philosophers in the world in his cave. Like the Indian philosophers, described in the Greek Alexander Romances, he not only meditates in cave but also abstains from food and drink and eats only plants.⁵² Plato “the Divine Sage” lectures Alexander about the ethics of rule and, also predicts his soon death.⁵³

Alexander here is a Roman, who conquered all the world, beginning with Rome, India and China in the East to Russia and Arabia. He subdued Germans and build the great wall to protect the world from Yajuj (Gog and Magog). Alexander also started the sea voyage accompanied by Khidr and Ilyas. As in the Greek *Romance* (manuscript L), he descends into the depths of the sea and sees the mysteries of ocean. He is also an inventor of an astrolabe and the famous mirror of Alexander.⁵⁴ He is also accompanied by Plato, a leader of group of philosophers of Greece, who held philosophy superior to prophethood.⁵⁵ Khusrow’s Alexander is not a prophet but an ordinary ruler (although it is mentioned that he destroyed the fire-temples), and the poet always tries to show all the positive sides of the king.⁵⁶

Jami (d. 1494) “Logic of Alexander” (*Kherad-nāma-ye eskandari*), which is a part of *Haft Awrang* (*Seven Thrones*),⁵⁷ continues the theme of philosophers symposium at

49 BILQUIS, *Monograph* (n. 46), 66-67.

50 A.M. PIEMONTESE, “Sources and Art of the Amir Khosrou’s “The Alexandrine Mirror” in: F. Lewis and S. Sharma (eds.) *The Necklace of the Pleiades: Studies in Persian Literature Presented to Heshmat Moayyad on his 80th Birthday*, Leiden 2010, 34-35.

51 See: The unique European translation of Āinahaī Sikandari: Amir Khusrau, *Lo Specchio Alessandrino*, Traduzione dal persano e introduzione di A.M. PIEMONTESE, Soveria Mannelli 1999, 40.

52 PIEMONTESE, “Figura” (n. 3), 125.

53 PIEMONTESE, “Figura” (n. 3), 125-146.

54 BILQUIS, *Monograph* (n. 46), 67-68.

55 BILQUIS, *Monograph* (n. 46), 74 ff.

56 MAHARRAMOV, *Khamsas* (n. 41), 116.

57 S. ASIRVATHAM, “Alexander the philosopher in the Greco-Roman, Persian and Arabic Traditions” in: R. Stoneman, K. Erickson and I. Netton (eds.) *Alexander Romance in Persia and the East*, Groningen 2012, 322.

Alexander's court from Nizami.⁵⁸ The group now consists of: Aristotle, Plato, Socrates, Hippocrates, Pythagoras, Asclepius and Hermes. Jami provides a short summary of Alexander's life; only about one quarter of to one third of the work directly concerns Alexander.⁵⁹ The journey to India is related briefly: "When Alexander marched his army on India, he heard of the wisdom of the Brahmins."⁶⁰ The story is the same as in the Greek *Romance*: The Brahmins decline to send an emissary to Alexander, and he declares a war against them. They say that they are only the group of ascetics who have nothing to do with war affairs. Alexander reaches their caves and converses with them. At the end of the conversation he offers them anything they want. The Brahmins respond that they want eternal life and that is not Alexander's to give. They say to him: *If you understand this, why are you a slave to desire?* He says that his actions are ordered by God and the God send him to convert the people of the world.⁶¹

The *Book of Darab (Dārābnāmeh)*⁶² expands, not to say changes almost completely Alexander's adventures in India. Although the author must have known Ferdowsi's work, the earlier plot concerning Alexander becomes almost untraceable. Alexander as a baby is abandoned by his mother in the mountains, near the dwelling of Aristotle (it is similar to the birth tale of Cyrus the Great), he ascends the Mount of Qaf riding on the speaking horse (like that of the prophet Mohammed). He is an average man, trying to win the interest of the ladies with his looks rather than with qualities like courage or bravery.⁶³ There are many new elements as unexpected as the fight between Būrān-dokt (also called Rowšanak), Alexander's warrior-like wife and queen of Persia and one of Kayd's daughter Djejbāvah. However, those episodes take place in India, whose landscape is described in a different way than in the *Shahnameh*, which almost directly follows the Pseudo-Callisthenes' *Romance*. Elephants ornamented in jewelry, Indians wearing turbans and carrying shiny swords on Kayd's court are without any doubt a part of real description of north-western India in eleventh-twelfth c. AD. As in the recensions discussed above, Alexander exchanges letters with Kayd. The Indian King offers him six gifts, four of them are the same as in the *Shahnameh*: a goblet which cannot be emptied, his beautiful daughter, a physician, a philosopher, and further a stone which frees his holder from desires and a horse, which may become invisible.

The king's character seems to be a reminiscence of the Indian sage Dandamis, known from the Pseudo-Callisthenes' *Romance*. The Indian king eats only two times in a month, because the act of eating in his opinion brings a human closer to an animal, and he believes that a man is healthier and stronger when he eats less. He can also beat a thousand warriors in a battle, despite this severe diet. He is two hundred years old, has only one daughter as a result of one single act of intercourse in his lifetime, and he feels no desire. Kayd appears to possess all the qualities of a man who can restrain his senses, just like famous Indian ascetics, who can control functions of their organism. Perhaps he is depicted that way in pur-

58 STONEMAN, *Alexander* (n. 14), 38.

59 HANAWAY, "Alexander" (n. 25), 98.

60 HANAWAY, "Alexander" (n. 25), 101.

61 HANAWAY, "Alexander" (n. 25), 101.

62 GAILLARD, *Alexandre* (n. 13).

63 STONEMAN, *Alexander* (n. 14), 32-33.

pose to represent a typical Indian noble king in the style of Dandamis, the chief of the naked philosophers mentioned earlier. It may be useful to recall that Dandamis ate only food provided by nature surrounding him, had only two children, a boy and a girl, to replace their parents, and did not meet women anymore. It is also noteworthy, that when Alexander tests a physician sent him by Kayd, he tells him that a healthy man should not eat too much nor sleep with women because “a young man grows old quickly by sleeping with women.” The last person connected to original *Romance* is Poros, caught by Alexander in the Ganges shore, who refuses to convert to Islam.

The *Dārābnamah* also contains a story of Alexander’s meeting with Indian sages. It is different from the *Romance*’s story, and the questioning is reversed. It’s Alexander who is being questioned by the descendants of Mahâbil who came to him from Ceylon (where the tomb of Adam is) and he is incapable of answering any of their questions.⁶⁴ The episode reminds us of the *Alexander Romance* story; Alexander asks the gymnosophists what they want from him, and their answer is “give us immortality”. Alexander cannot fulfill their request. In the *Dārābnamah*, he is not able to give them any satisfying answer to their questions. Shahrvand, the oldest among them asks Alexander, why did he come to the country. Alexander responds, that he is here to propagate the religion of Islam. The sage admonishes him, saying that Islam is known to them. Alexander is embarrassed but Shahrvand keeps examining him harshly: “Why didn’t you come to us, first, we would have told you what to do.”, Alexander answers that he doesn’t know; The sage asks him next, what have you brought us? Now, even Aristotle, who is standing with Alexander, is confused and rushes Alexander to answer the awkward questions. Then the sage starts to blame Alexander for killing so many Indians, and mock his intention to visit the tomb of Adam. Shahrvand asks Alexander to give absolution to him and his companions, so they can go to the Paradise. Alexander is incapable of giving it to them and he is being lectured by Shahravand that he should not be so deluded and arrogant because his destiny is in God’s hands and he should not be so attached to the idea of conquest and seek richness.⁶⁵

Further adventures of Alexander take place in some magical India, in the company of Būrān-dokt, Aristotle, the Indian sage Hamarpal (of whom Aristotle is jealous because Hamarpal has more books than he does), and even Plato and Hippokrates. They visit the tomb of biblical Adam (according to Arab mythology, Adam descended to Ceylon after being banned from Paradise) and they come across a huge tree, planted by biblical Eve. Some stories seem to have the character of a sermon. The Amazons are here inhabitants of India, they ride elephants, and their queen turns out to be Darius’ daughter. Finally, they almost reach the mythical Mount Qaf, which according to Persian tradition lies outside the world.

The anonymous *Iskandarnāmah* describes how Alexander comes in disguise to the Indian king Poros. Knowing that he had been recognized, Alexander flees away to his army. The next day they stand on the battlefield, Alexander uses a trick to beat Poros’ elephants, this time with blackened camels (smeared with tar), ridden by Arabs with naphtha and fire (In Ferdowsi’s account they iron horses filled with oil). This motif is taken from the *Alexander Romance*. As in the *Book of Dārāb* Poros refuses to convert to Islam and dies. Alex-

64 GAILLARD, *Alexandre* (n. 13), 56-57.

65 GAILLARD, *Alexandre* (n. 13), 206-209.

ander continues his journey to Kashmir, where he plan to stay for a month. The people of Kashmir are described as being handsome, clean, sweet-smelling and fair (opposite to Indian people). They are mostly cow worshippers (another authentic information about the religious beliefs in India), while some of them worship stars. Alexander, seeing such good-looking people desires to marry Mahafarin, the daughter of Azadbakh, king of Kashmir. Azadbakht agrees to this, but he has in mind a plan how to kill Alexander. In order to save his daughter virginity he ask a wise Brahmin to make Alexander impotent. The newlyweds fall in love with each other and Alexander seeks a Brahman for help. The Brahman promises help but in the end he lies and hides in the mountains. So this is a first example of a Brahman who is not noble and philosophical but cunning and deceitful. This love story ends happily. Next, Alexander goes to Ceylon, to visit Adam's tomb, and the to the Land of Gold, which is a unique story in all δ^* group of texts. Alexander's men gather as much gold as they can, but after that wild, dog-sized bees attack them. They arrived to the land of Davalpayan, the "rope-legged" people. They are "fair-skinned, clean and beautiful" and feed upon fruits. They have no bones in their legs. This motif is familiar from the Greek *Romance*, where, during his Indian campaign, Alexander is being attacked by *himantopodes* – "spindle shanked" (*LSJ* translation) or strap-legged. In the *Shāhnāme* they are referred to as "men who have soft feet". They are often attested in the Persian literature, even from the pre-Islamic period. They are described as a tribe living in the north-eastern Iran.⁶⁶ In the *Iskandarnāmah* and *Dārābnamah* they inhabit India. After his Indian campaign Alexander sends all his treasures to Oman, and sets to Mecca.

Conclusion

The image of India as described in the Persian versions of the *Alexander Romance* discussed above needs to be interpreted in various ways. First of all, what is the relation between Pseudo-Callisthenes' *Romance* and its later Islamic versions. Secondly, have the knowledge of India increased in the Persian versions of the *Romance* or if the Indian landscape remains miraculous and unreal. Finally, is "Persian" India more authentic than in the Greek *Romance*?

As I was trying to demonstrate the core of the Alexander stories concerning India had been preserved in the Persian versions of the *Romance*. The most important events during his campaigns remained in the story with a minor changes. The *Shāhnāme* of Ferdowsi is without a doubt, the closest version to the original *Romance*, although the adventures of the king, which in the Greek *Romance* took place in India, had been placed "somewhere" between India and China in Ferdowsi's version. The most prominent "Indian" episode is the Alexander's meeting with philosophers. The motif is certainly a subject of transformation, even, as in the *Darābnāme*, Alexander himself is subdued to the philosophers. The exchange of letters between Alexander and the Indian kings and the motif of speaking or magical trees are also influential. Some of the important episodes has changed the location; queen Kandake whose kingdom is placed somewhere in the East,⁶⁷ becomes Qaydafeh and her kingdom is now in Andalusia; location that different may be in my opinion explained

66 E. VENETIS, "Islamic Lore and Supernatural Creatures in the Persian Prose Book of Alexander (*Iskandarnāma*)", *Persica* 21 (2006-2007), 76-78.

67 In my opinion in India, see: SZALC, "Kandake" (n. 26), 357-370.

by the Arab conquest, which took place in the early eighth c. AD. For the same reason, probably, the territories visited by Alexander include those connected to the Arab conquest. Not only Alexander visits India, as the Paradise (according to Amir Khusrow, the Garden of Eden was considered to be located near Mekran) and Ceylon as the place where the biblical Adam tomb is. He also went to Arabia, Yemen and Mecca, not to mention his contribution as a propagator of Islam, as he is presented in all of versions of the *Alexander Romance*, discussed above (excluding the *Shāhnāme*).

The main Indian episodes are therefore present in the Persian romances but with a paradox – on the one hand, they are often changed and misplaced; on the other hand, all analyzed texts contain some new, authentic information about India. Alexander's itinerary has been enriched in places like Kashmir, Kandahar, Tibet and Ceylon; Indian people are described as veiled in colorful clothes, some of them are wearing turbans and swords (this is one of the features characteristic for today's Sikhs), elephants are covered in jewelry and are sometimes used to carry legendary Indian gold and luxury products. India is also described as the country rich in saffron and musk. The Indian king Kayd seems to be a reminiscence of the very similar character of Indian sage Dandamis, known from the Greek *Alexander Romance*. Same as the chief of the naked philosophers, Kayd eats very little (two times in a month), he has had only one single intercourse in his life to have a child (Dandamis states that he only has two children to replace the parents and do not sleep with women anymore). The Indian sage lives outside the city and eats only the food which can be provided by the surrounding nature. All those features can be ascribed to the Indian naked philosophers, those known from the *Alexander Romance* and those authentic Indian ascetics who made such an impression on Alexander and his companions. Indian religious beliefs also find a mention in the accounts discussed above. Indians are presented as the cow and sun worshippers; In the Nizami's *Iqbāl-nāme* Alexander sees the Buddhist shrine with a statue of Buddha covered in gold which is also a common view in the Buddhist shrines, even today. Except the description of the character of the king Kayd, which is close to the Pseudo Callisthenes' figure of the chief of the philosophers, Dandamis, all of the above mentioned elements are new in the description of India. They also seem to reflect the real knowledge on India; although the number of mentions of India has decreased in Persian Alexander stories, they reflect the authentic view of this country.

The influence of the Arab mythology is also visible. The map of Alexander's itinerary had been extended and seems to reflect the map of the Arab conquests. Also, the location of the biblical Adam's tomb in Ceylon (and at the same time the new place for Alexander to visit) comes from the Arab mythology.

Persian authors, writing their stories on Alexander, initially based on the Pseudo-Calisthenes' account, made them more exotic and richer in fabulous stories. Alexander himself has been transformed in the prophet of Islam, the great philosopher and the patron of the artists and scientists. Their Persian origin and the neighborhood of India, made them less surprised and less fascinated with the Oriental landscape and way of life. The closeness and long term trade relationship with India made their accounts on this country more objective and at the same time more authentic. It seems to me that the magical and exotic flavor of India has moved to the other countries around and the essence of the Oriental unexpected character has been moved to China. However, India is still an important element in the stories of Alexander; the main motifs like exchange of the letters and gifts with the

Indian kings and the famous meeting with the Indian philosophers are still one of the most popular and iconic stories connected to the Alexander through the ages of the evolution and spread of his legend around the world.

An Early Mirror for Princes and Manual for Secretaries: *The Epistolary Novel of Aristotle and Alexander*

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1 The Discovery of a Pseudo-Aristotelian novel

During his research on Aristotelian and Pseudo-Aristotelian material in the libraries of Istanbul, Richard Walzer came across a manuscript containing a collection of literary epistles, which he briefly described in an article published in 1934.¹ Walzer described the text as an apocryphal correspondence between Aristotle and Alexander but failed to recognize that the text contained a “genuine” pseudo-Aristotelian text, namely the *De Mundo*, as Samuel Miklos Stern would show some thirty years later.² In 1961, Mojtaba Minovi described a second copy of the same work, also found in Istanbul.³

A few years later, Mario Grignaschi began to study what he termed a “roman épistolaire”, i.e. an “epistolary novel.”⁴ From its classical references, mainly related to Greek history and mythology, Grignaschi postulated a Late Antique Greek original, which would have been reworked in Syria by a Christian with Hermetic leanings.⁵ This was the only way to explain long extracts of Hermetic theology and references to Homer, Pindar, and Hercules, next to an allusion to the massacre of Maronites monks at the hand of a group of Jacobites in 517. But as these references were accompanied by elements for which he discovered parallels in Byzantine treatises on warfare and strategy, next to extracts resembling Sasanid theories of government, Grignaschi had to admit that this mixture, written in a

1 Description of MS Istanbul, Fatih 5323 (dated 716/1316–1317) by R. WALZER, “Arabische Aristotelesübersetzungen in Istanbul”, *Gnomon* 10 (1934), 277–280 [repr. in R. WALZER, *Greek into Arabic*, Cambridge (Mass.), 1962, 137–141.]

2 S.M. STERN, “The Arabic Translations of the Pseudo-Aristotelian Treatise *De Mundo*,” *Muséon* 77 (1964), 187–204, at p. 187 [repr. in F. SEZGIN et al. (eds.), *Pseudo-Aristotelica preserved in Arabic translation*, I, Frankfurt-am-Main 2000]. Stern devoted two more articles to the *De Mundo*, after discovering other manuscripts showing alternative translations to the one found in the two Istanbul manuscripts of the *Epistolary Novel of Aristotle and Alexander*. See the recent survey and complete bibliography by W. RAVEN, “*De Mundo*: Tradition syriaque et arabe”, in: *Dictionnaire des Philosophes Antiques. Supplément*, I, Paris 2003, 481–483.

3 Description of the MS Istanbul, Ayasofya 4260 (dated 714/1314–1315) by M. MINOVI, in: *Revue de la faculté des Lettres de Téhéran*, 8.3 (1340/1961), 19–23 (quoted by C.-H. DE FOUCHÉCOUR, *Moralia: Les Notions morales dans la littérature persane du 3e/9e au 7e/13e*, Paris 1986, 171, n. 157).

4 Walzer had already noted the common genre shared by both the Pseudo-Aristotelian and the Pseudo-Hippocratic novels as that of a “*Briefroman*”, cf. supra WALZER, “Arabische” (n. 1), 280, n. 4.

5 See M. GRIGNASCHI, “La Siyāsatu-l-‘āmmiyya et l’influence iranienne sur la pensée politique islamique” in: *Monumentum H.S. Nyberg*, III, Leiden/Tehran, 1975, 33–275, at 60–61, reviewing and expanding hypotheses he expressed in earlier publications.

highly stylized, almost archaic Arabic that included Quranic expressions, would indicate an early Islamic reworking of the original novel.⁶ The best candidate for this task was the little-known Sālim Abū al-‘Alā’ (d. after 743), a secretary and *mawlā* who belonged to the Umayyad court during the reign of Hishām b. ‘Abd al-Malik (r. 724–743) and was mentioned by Ibn al-Nadīm (*Fihrist*, 131 Tajaddod) as having “edited (*aṣḥaḥa*)” some of the letters exchanged between Aristotle and Alexander after they had been “translated (*nuqila*)” for him.⁷ Furthermore, Grignaschi admitted the possibility that some of the letters may have been inserted and even expanded at a later stage.⁸

Since no author was given for the collection, and as most of the letters and treatises were ascribed to Aristotle,⁹ the medieval reader was supposed to consider it as a genuine Aristotelian correspondence. The existence of letters from Aristotle was well attested in antiquity, starting with a reference to their collection at the hands of Artemon (1st c. BC?) by the Pseudo-Demetrius of Phalerum in his treatise *On Style*.¹⁰ In the third century, Diogenes Laertius mentioned four letters from Aristotle to Alexander and an undefined number

6 His analysis of the use of Byzantine and Sasanian treatises in *Letter VIII* appeared in GRIGNASCHI, “Siyāsatu-l-‘āmmiyya” (n. 5). Grignaschi corrected some of his earlier hypotheses through the years as he pursued his analysis of the different epistles, see most importantly, M. GRIGNASCHI, “Les Rasā’il ‘Aristātālisa ‘ilā-l-Iskandar de Sālim Abū-l-‘Alā’ et l’activité culturelle à l’époque omayyade”, *BEO* 19 (1965–1966), 7–83; M. GRIGNASCHI, “Le Roman épistolaire classique conservé dans la version arabe de Sālim Abū al-‘Alā’”, *Muséon* 80 (1967), 211–264 and a synthesis written shortly before his early death in M. GRIGNASCHI, “Un Roman épistolaire gréco-arabe: la correspondance [sic!] entre Aristote et Alexandre”, in: M. Bridges and J. Ch. Bürgel (eds.), *The Problematics of Power: Eastern and Western Representations of Alexander the Great*, Bern/New York 1996, 109–123.

7 As is well-known, translation activities were often a team-activity in the Middle Ages. For this reason, Grignaschi considered the possibility that the Christian elements may have been incorporated by a translator who was working alongside Sālim in the chancellery. See GRIGNASCHI, “Siyāsatu-l-‘āmmiyya” (n. 5), 80, n. 107, Grignaschi confuses Sālim Abū al-‘Alā’ with Sālim Ibn Farrukh, but nothing in the *Fihrist* allows us to accept this identification. M. MARÓTH, *The Correspondence between Aristotle and Alexander the Great: An Anonymous Greek Novel in Letters in Arabic Translation*, Pilsicsaba 2006, 8, is the first to my knowledge to suggest that Sālim may have been Christian himself. There is no reason to exclude this possibility, to which we will come back in the conclusion of this paper. More details about Sālim’s relation with the caliph are to be found in I. ‘ABBĀS, ‘*Abd al-Ḥamīd ibn Yaḥyā al-Kaṭīb wa mā tabbaqā min rasā’ilīhi wa rasā’il Sālim Abī al-‘Alā*’, Amman 1988, 28–33; G. FOWDEN, *Qaṣayr ‘Amra: Art and the Umayyad Elite in Late Antique Syria*, Berkeley/Los Angeles/London 2004, 262, n. 51.

8 GRIGNASCHI, “Siyāsatu-l-‘āmmiyya” (n. 5), 61–63. This point was made more recently by MARÓTH, *Correspondence* (n. 7), 96–97 (about *Letters VIII, X, XIV*). As early as 1966, in M. GRIGNASCHI “Quelques spécimens de la littérature sassanide conservés dans les bibliothèques d’Istanbul”, *JA* 254 (1966), 1–142, at 9, 14, 15, n. 35, 40–41, n. 69, Grignaschi was considering Sālim as the author of *Letters VIII, XI, XII*. He later noticed (in GRIGNASCHI “Siyāsatu-l-‘āmmiyya” (n. 5), published in 1975) several parallels between *Letters V* and *VIII*.

9 *Risāla* is used in Arabic for both a ‘letter’ and a ‘treatise’, having replaced the earlier *kitāb* used indifferently for ‘letter’, ‘chapter’, and ‘book’. In French, an ‘épître’ must have a focus, just as a ‘treatise’ does, and it is implied that it will be read by more than one recipient, while a ‘lettre’ is limited to an exchange between two persons. English uses both ‘epistle’ and ‘letter’ with no such nuances. On the evolution of scholarship-related vocabulary in Arabic, see G. SCHOELER, *The Oral and the Written in Early Islam*, London 2010.

10 A. MALHERBE, *Ancient Epistolary Theorists*, Atlanta 1988, 2.

of them to Philip.¹¹ Closer to the Islamic conquest, the philosopher John Philoponus (d. ca. 570) refers to a volume of such letters in his *Commentary of Aristotle's Rhetorics*.¹² By the end of the tenth century, Ibn al-Nadīm, the celebrated book-seller and author of a bibliographical *Catalogue (al-Fihrist)*, knows of “many letters of Aristotle to Alexander.” He admires the style and wonders at the elegance they must have demonstrated in the original language.¹³

The role of Aristotle in the *Epistolary Novel* is an aggregate of the traditional figure, teaching ethics and cosmology, with his later representation, stemming from pseudographical literature where his name was associated with tactical treatises, astrology, botanics, talismans and physiognomy.¹⁴ Above all, Aristotle is introduced in the first letters as the tutor designated by Philip's for his son, later becoming his main military and political adviser.¹⁵

1.1 Title

The manuscript discovered by Minovi, which is the older of the two known copies of the sixteen-letters collection (although manuscripts containing only one or a few letters and/or treatises have been discovered)¹⁶, gives the following long description in guise of a title (MS Ayasofya 4260, fol. 1b):

يشتمل هذا الجزء على مستحسن ما وُجد من الرسائل و المحاورات التي دارت بين الاسكندر ذي القرنين الملك و بين معلّمه أرسطاطاليس الحكيم و ما تخيّر من المراثي في الاسكندر: قول جماعة من الفلاسفة و قوم من بطانته، يذكر مفصّلاً إن شاء أ . تعالى...

- 11 D. L V 27. See the annotated translation by M.-O. GOULET–CAZÉ et al., *Diogène Laërce. Vie et Doctrines des Philosophes Illustres*, Paris 1999, 584, notes 2 and 4. For a study of the classical references, see M. PLEZIA and J. BIELAWSKI, *Lettres d'Aristote à Alexandre sur la Politique envers les Cités*, Wrocław/Warsaw/Kraków, 1970, 10–14. M. PLEZIA, *Aristotelis epistolarum fragmenta cum testamento*, Warsaw, 1961 and M. PLEZIA, *Aristotelis privatorum scriptorum fragmenta*, Leipzig 1977, attempted to gather all references to Aristotle's supposed exchanges and provided partial translations.
- 12 G. FOWDEN, “Pseudo-Aristotelian Politics and Theology in Universal Islam,” in: P.F. Bang and D. Kołodziejczyk (eds.), *Universal Empire: A Comparative Approach to Imperial Culture and Representation in Eurasian History*, Cambridge 2012, 130–148, at 134, n. 21. See already GRIGNASCHI, “Si-yāsatu-l-’āmmiyya” (n. 5), 89.
- 13 IBN AL-NADĪM, *al-Fihrist*, 158 Sayyid/247 Flügel.
- 14 For a study of the development of ‘occult sciences’ within an hellenistic scientific framework, A.–J. FESTUGIÈRE, *La révélation d'Hermès Trismégiste, I: L'astrologie et les sciences occultes*, Paris 1944, remains the best introduction.
- 15 Gell. IX 3, quotes a letter of Philip to Aristotle, announcing the birth of a son and expressing his wish to have the philosopher as a mentor for the future king, as was noted by WALZER, “Arabische” (n. 1), 280, and by MARÓTH, *Correspondence* (n. 7), 13, n. 37. Isocrates, in his letters to Philip and to Alexander, and Aristotle in his *Protreptic*, are known to have had competing views on the proper education which should be given to Alexander (see P. MERLAN, “Isocrates, Aristotle, and Alexander the Great”, *Historia* 3 (1954), 60–81).
- 16 See FOUCHÉCOUR, *Moralia* (n. 3), 71; S.M. STERN, *Aristotle on the World-State*, London 1968, 1–3; PLEZIA and BIELAWSKI, *Lettres* (n. 11), 18–25; D. BRAFMAN, *The Arabic De Mundo: An Edition with Translation and Commentary*, Unpublished PhD, Duke University, 1985, 56–57; GRIGNASCHI, “Roman” (n 6), 120.

“This volume (*al-juzʿ*) comprises the best of what was found (*mustahṣan mā wuġida*) of the letters (*al-rasāʾil*) and conversations/consultations (*al-muḥāwarāt*) which took place (*dārat*) between King Alexander the Two-Horned¹⁷ and his teacher Aristotle the Wise/the Philosopher (*al-ḥakīm*), and what was selected from the funeral oration (*al-marāṭī*) on Alexander: the speeches by a group of philosophers (*jamāʿa min al-falāsifa*) and by a group from his retinue (*biṭānatihi*). The contents will now be described in detail, God willing.”

[A table of contents follows. Sixteen chapters are enumerated and numbered using the Arabic *abjad*, from *alif* to *yāʾ-waw*.]

Another title appears in the Fatih manuscript immediately before a somewhat modified and abbreviated version of the title given in the Ayasofya manuscript (MS Fatih 5323, fol. 1a):

كتاب الأحوال والأخبار الاسكندرية وإخبار حكماء زمان اسكندر المزبور في التواريخ.
يشتمل هذا الكتاب على مستحسن الرسائل التي دارت بين الاسكندر و أرسطاطاليس الحكيم...

“The book of the events and stories related to Alexander (*al-aḥbar al-iskandariyya*), and the history of the philosophers who lived at the time of Alexander, as preserved in the chronicles. This book contains the best letters (*al-rasāʾil*) exchanged (*dārat*) between Alexander¹⁸ and his teacher Aristotle the Wise/the Philosopher (*al-ḥakīm*).”

17 HUNAYN IBN ISHĀQ, *Ādāb al-Falāsifa*, 87 Badawī, mentions two meanings for the Quranic name “Dhū al-Qarnayn” (the “Two-Horned” as in Quran, 18: 82–97), which he understands as referring to Alexander the Great: (1) he who reached the extremities of the world (the two ‘horns’ of the world, already in Aramaic and with the same meaning in Arabic); (2) the one with two braids (*dāfiratān*). These two meanings are known to Agapius of Menbidj (1st half of the 10th c.), *Kitāb al-ʿUnvan*, (ed.) A. Vasiliev, Paris 1909, 635 [79], who explains that the second acception was used to designate the Parthian king Kisrounis, while in the case of Alexander it was meant to refer to his travels East and West. T. Fahd, quoted by Z.D. ZUWIYYA, *A Companion to Alexander Literature in the Middle Ages*, Leiden/Boston 2011, 74, n. 4, thought that the most probable origin of the Quranic epithet was to be found in the influence of the iconography of coins minted by Alexander’s successors where the king was at time depicted with the horns of the god Ammon (already J. HOROVITZ, *Koranische Untersuchungen*, Berlin 1926, 111, pointing out to the Lakhmid king Mundhir III as designated under this title according to Hishām ibn al-Kalbī). This was already the opinion of K.H. GRAF, “Über den ‘Zwegehörnten’ des Koran,” *ZDMG* 8 (1954), 442–449, at 448, adding to the coins the mention by Clement of Alexandria in his *Protrepticus* of Alexander as having asked to be represented with the horns of Ammon on his statues. The coins depicting Alexander’s successors were widely available in the Arabian Peninsula from the third c. BC onwards. Fakes were even issued as early as the Hellenistic period by the Eastern Arab Abiel kings, in today’s Bahrain, see P. VAN ALFEN, “A die study of the eastern Arabian Abiel coinage”, in: M. Huth, P. van Alfen (eds.), *Coinage of the Caravan Kingdoms: Studies in the Monetization of Ancient Arabia*, New York 2010, 549–594, plates 29–42. For further bibliography on the use of Alexander’s portrait under Roman emperors, C. JOUANNO, *Naissance et métamorphoses du roman d’Alexandre: domaine grec*, Paris 2002, 49, n. 175. See further infra, Addenda (1).

18 GRIGNASCHI (“Rasāʾil,” (n. 6), 7) considered the two Istanbul manuscripts to be “independent versions” deriving from a single original. He omits to mention the fact that in the Fatih manuscript, the reference to Alexander as the “Two-Horned” has disappeared from the title. Already by the time of the historian and commentator al-Tabarī (m. 923), “orthodox” Muslims would show uneasiness when faced with the assimilation of the Koranic hero and the Macedonian sovereign. This tendency only increased through the ages.

A table of contents is given on the two following folios, but it shows some negligence on the part of the copyist, who initially attempted to provide a fuller table of contents that would include the incipit of each letter. He actually copied the same incipit for what appear as letters I and III twice, thus going to *yā'-zā'* (which would imply 17 pieces). A later hand in the margins of the Fatih manuscript has corrected his mistake and added the sixteen-title list in regard.¹⁹

As seen above from the title given in the Ayasofia manuscript, the preserved text is only a selection of what were considered to be the best letters in a more extensive collection.²⁰ The anonymous copyists of the two Istanbul manuscripts have kept the two colophons preserved in the originals they were copying.²¹ The first of these is given directly at the end of the *Funeral oration* on Alexander's coffin, which constitutes the concluding episode of the *Epistolary Novel* (= *Letter XVI*). Its wording recalls the title we find in the Ayasofya manuscript. The vocabulary and the rare name of the copyist both agree with an early date of composition:

كان على النسخة المنقولة هذه منها ما هذه صورته : هذا ما وجدته من محاوراته المسطورة
ورسائله الأعلام المشهورة بخطّ المرّجى ابن المؤمل الكاتب النفاري وذكر أنّه قابل بها عدّة
نسخ وصحّحها...

“This is the faithful copy (*ṣūra*) of what was on the manuscript (*al-nuṣḥa*) we have transcribed (*al-manqūla*)²²: ‘This is what I have found of his written exchanges and of his celebrated and famous letters from the pen of al-Muraḡḡā ibn al-Mu’ammil, the scribe (*al-kātib*) of Niffār. And he mentioned [the fact] that he had compared it with other copies and corrected it...’” (MS Istanbul, Aya Sofya 4260, fol. 122b–123a)

The copyist of the manuscript used by the scribes of the two preserved Istanbul manuscripts inserts his own colophon directly after copying the earliest colophon. He points to some oddities in the style of the material he has been transcribing, which we should probably understand as some archaisms in the syntax and vocabulary. He gives his name as ‘Alī ibn

19 The titles in the different manuscripts (including those of the sixteen letters) have not yet received the attention they deserve. See WALZER, “Arabische” (n. 1), 139; D. GUTAS, “On Graeco-Arabic Epistolary ‘Novels’”, *Middle Eastern Literature* 12.1, April (2009), 59–70, at 60 (wrongly stating that both manuscripts carry the same title, probably following MARÓTH, *Correspondence* (n. 7), 1–2, where the title and table of contents are reproduced without indication of the alternative readings of MS Ayasofia).

20 As noted already by PLEZIA and BIELAWSKI, *Lettres* (n. 11), 21.

21 The relation between the two manuscripts is still disputed. GRIGNASCHI, “Rasā’il” (n. 6), 7; GRIGNASCHI, “Roman” (n. 6), 217–218, considered them as independent from one another, although stemming back to a common archetype copied in the XIth c. (pace MARÓTH, *Correspondence* (n. 7), 2, who misunderstood Grignaschi’s statement). Grignaschi described both manuscripts in detail in his “Roman” (n. 6), 214–218, and pointed out later (“Siyāsatul-’āmmiyya” (n. 5), 63–68, esp. 66, n. 76) to the presence of corrections in the Ayasofya showing that the author had collated his text with a Syriac version of the *De Mundo*. MARÓTH, *Correspondence* (n. 7), 2, noticed an important difference between the two manuscripts, namely the adoption of a modernized orthography in the Fatih MS, while the Ayasofya has retained some archaic features in the orthography of the *alif maqṣūra* and *ḥamza*, cf. MARÓTH, *Correspondence* (n. 7), “Appendix”, 99–100.

22 The redundant formulation in Arabic is reminiscent of Syriac syntax and could be the trace of a Syriac-speaking copyist.

Muḥammad ibn Aḥmad ibn al-Qāḍī al-Ḥamaḍānī, of Mayyāfāriqīn and the date of his work is given as 491/1097.²³

1.2 The Appendices

Extra chapters and extracts also related to Aristotle and Alexander appear after the letters, constituting about 15 percent of the complete manuscript. These do not belong to the *Epistolary novel* per se, and they are expressly given as appendices (most probably by the Mayyāfāriqīn copyist, since they follow *his* colophon). He states that he discovered them together in a single volume:

وقع إليّ كتابٌ بعد فراغي من نقل الرسائل، فيه الرسالة عن الاسكندر إلى والدته يُعزّيها، وألفاظ وحكم فلسفية لأرسطو [طاليس]²⁴ ومواعظ وأدب [كذا] رأيْتُ إضافتها إلى رسائله

“I came across a book (*kitāb*) after I had finished copying the *Letters* (*al-rasā'il*), in which was the epistle (*al-risāla*) of Alexander to his mother, mourning her, as well as philosophical sayings and maxims by Aristotle, and exhortations and morals [*'adāb*, with *hamza*, corr. *ādāb*], which I thought I could add to his *Letters*.”²⁵

Some of these pieces are well-known from other medieval Arabic authors:

– The first (134–136 Maróth [Arabic text, hereafter: Maróth ع]) is a letter purportedly addressed by Alexander to his mother announcing his coming death to her (cf. Pseudo-Callisthenes, Greek β Version, III 33, and Syriac version, III 22 for Alexander briefly comforting his mother before proceeding with his will).²⁶ The letter exists in several versions, but the one given in the Istanbul manuscripts refers to the historian al-Madā'inī (753–after 830) as transmitting it from 'Amr ibn al-Mas'ada (d. ca 832), who would have recited it in the presence of the caliph al-Ma'mūn (r. 813–833).²⁷ This letter of the Macedonian sover-

23 GRIGNASCHI, “Rasā'il” (n. 6), 7; GUTAS, “Graeco-Arabic” (n. 19), 63.

24 The stroke above the last letter of *Aristū* (a ‘tilde’, according to A. GACEK, *Arabic Manuscripts: A Vademecum for Readers*, Leiden/Boston 2012², s. v. Abbreviations and abbreviation symbols) shows that this was understood as an abbreviation (for *Aristūtālis*) and not as an alternative pronunciation of the same name.

25 Cf. GRIGNASCHI, “Roman” (n. 6), 230–237, who gave the incipit of the appendices (GRIGNASCHI, “Roman” (n. 6), “Appendice I”, 254–255). These appendices have been partly included by Maróth in his edition [*Correspondence* (n. 7)], with the exception of the Ḥātimī (d. 388/998) treatise on al-Mutanabbī (d. 354/965), on which see infra n. 36.

26 For a modern translation of the β version (according to the modifications of the Leiden manuscript [L]), see G. BOUNOURE and B. SERRET, *Pseudo-Callisthène. Le Roman d'Alexandre*, Paris 1992. As for the Syriac translator, he does not seem to be aware of the existence of a full letter of consolation of Alexander to his mother, see E.A.W. BUDGE, *The History of Alexander the Great: Being the Syriac Version of the Pseudo-Callisthenes*, Cambridge 1889, 139. The Arabic version of the letter given in the two Istanbul manuscripts is close, but not identical, to the second of the two versions included by Hunayn ibn Ishāq in his *Ādāb al-Falāsifa*, 93–95 Badawī.

27 According to U. SEZGIN, “al-Madā'inī”, in: *Encyclopaedia of Islam*, V², 950–952, he was a reliable transmitter of *khabar*-s who wrote as much as al-Jāhiz, and was an authority on Khorasan, Fars, and India. 'Amr ibn Mas'ada belonged to al-Faḍl ibn Sahl's circle and worked for the chancellery of al-Ma'mūn after having started his career with the Barmakids. This letter of consolation appears in the Leiden manuscript (L version) of the Greek Pseudo-Callisthenes. It contains quite a number of classical themes of Second Sophistic literature, on which see R. WALZER and H. RITTER, *Studi su al-Kindī*, II: *Uno Scritto morale inedito di al-Kindī* (Temistio, Peri alupias ?), Rome 1938, 18, 22, 24 (Arabic text

eign has been added here because the copyist considered it to be the normal introduction to the *Laments* or *Funeral Oration* (= *Letter XVI*), which he had just copied as the concluding epistle for the *Epistolary Novel*.

– The second appendix (137–138 Maróth ξ) is taken from a spurious biography of Aristotle in which the philosopher is depicted as an orphan and a student of Plato who would have outsmarted the son of the king of Athens. The text is parallel to the version preserved in the MS Istanbul, Köprülü 1608. This biography has been studied by I. Düring and by D. Gutas who disagreed on the identity of the author to whom it should be attributed, simply given in the Arabic sources as an otherwise unknown Ptolemy the Foreigner (*al-Gharīb*).²⁸ The complete biography preserved in a unicum manuscript has not been published to this day, but it was known to Ibn al-Nadīm, who quotes from it.²⁹

– The third appendix (138–144 Maróth ζ) is a gnomology introduced with a short religious invocation attributed to Aristotle. It appears as well in the aforementioned Köprülü 1608 manuscript, which is somehow related to Hunayn ibn Ishāq's *Ādāb al-Falāsifa* (see 53s Badawī) and to the extract of the same text preserved by al-Mubaššir ibn Fātik, as was noted by M. Zakeri.³⁰ Zakeri suggests that this “sermon”, with its strong emphasis on knowledge, might have stemmed from Persian gnomological material available in Middle Persian to ‘Alī ibn ‘Ubayda al-Rayhānī.³¹

36–37; Italian transl. 52). On Alexander's letter to Olympias (of which the text of the Leiden manuscript is reproduced by WALZER and RITTER, *Studi*, 22, n. 4), see further, F. DOUFIKAR-AERTS, “Les Derniers jours d'Alexandre dans un roman populaire arabe: un miroir du roman syriaque du Pseudo-Callisthène”, in: L. Harf-Lancner, C. Kappler and F. Suard (eds.), *Alexandre le Grand dans les littératures occidentales et proche-orientales: actes du colloque de Paris, 27–29 novembre 1999*, Paris 1999, 61–89. Alexander's mother is named in the version transmitted here under the authority of al-Madā'inī, Urqiyya (from the Arabic root *RQY, carrying the meaning of ‘elevation’ or ‘refinement’), that is, an Arabic translation of Olympias, parallel to the way she is named in ‘Umara ibn Zayd (eighth c. AD), in the *Sīra* discovered by Doufekar-Aerts (see “Derniers”), and in Ibn Fātik, to which our text corresponds textually (although only the beginning of the letter is given in the *Muhtār al-ḥikam* probably because it was too famous and widely available, see al-Mubaššir ibn Fātik, 229 Badawī). The name appears as well in Abū Sulaymān al-Sijistānī, *Muntaḥab Šiwān al-ḥikma*, 55, l. 1062 Dunlop, where the orthography *Urqiyya* should be corrected into *Urqiyya* (by the simple addition of a dot, in Arabic). The version of al-Madā'inī differs from the three versions edited by A. SPITALER, “Die arabische Fassung des Trostbriefs Alexanders an seine Mutter. Ein Beitrag zur Ueberlieferung des arabischen Alexanderromans”, in: *Studi orientalistici in onore di G. Levi della Vida*, II, Rome 1956, 493–508, being closer to his “Rezension III,” as noted already by Grignaschi.

28 I. DÜRING, “Ptolemy's Vita Aristotelis Rediscovered”, in: R. Palmer and R. Hamerno-Kelly (eds.), *Philomathes: Studies and Essays in the Humanities in Memory of Philip Merlan*, The Hague 1971, 264–269, esp. 264–265. D. GUTAS, “The Spurious and the Authentic in the Arabic Lives of Aristotle”, in: J. Kraye, W. Ryan and C.B. Schmitt (eds.), *The Pseudo-Aristotle in the Middle Ages*, London 1986, 15–36, at 23, 30.

29 IBN AL-NADĪM, *al-Fihrist*, chapter VII, s. v. “Aristātālīs”; and GUTAS, “Spurious” (n. 28), 27 for a table of the parallels.

30 IBN FĀTIK, *Muhtār al-ḥikam*, 199 Badawī, seems to have preserved the original wording, with the introduction of the speech ‘*alā ru'ūs al-ašhād*, a vocabulary reminiscent of HUNAYN IBN ISHĀQ, *Ādāb al-Falāsifa*, 51 Badawī, where the author depicts traditional education among “the Sabaeans, the Zoroastrians, the Jews and the Christians up to this day”.

31 M. ZAKERI, “Before Aristotle became Aristotle: Pseudo-Aristotelian Aphorisms in: *Ādāb al-Falāsifa*”, in: A. Akasoy and W. Raven (eds.), *Islamic Thought in the Middle Ages: Studies in Text, Transmission and Translation, in Honour of Hans Daiber*, Leiden/Boston 2008, 649–693 (see 653–654 for a sum-

– The fourth appendix (145–146 Maróth ξ) is a scornful letter of Aristotle to “a pupil,” known as well to Ḥunayn ibn Ishāq who alludes to it in the *Ādāb al-Falāsifa*.³² Grignaschi considered it to be the work of a post-Second Sophistic rhetor.³³

– The fifth appendix (147 Maróth ξ) is presented as a quotation taken from Aristotle *De Anima*, followed by a short comment said to be from Themistius. An Arabic translation of Themistius commentary on the *De Anima* is known, but I was not able to locate the quotation, which seems to be corrupt. The translation was supposedly the work of Ishāq ibn Ḥunayn’s after his father’s own translation of the text into Syriac.³⁴ This appendix is concluded by the traditional salutation on the prophet Muḥammad by the copyist (which I suggest should be identified to ‘Alī ibn Muḥammad ibn Aḥmad ibn al-Qāḍī al-Ḥamaḍānī, of Mayyāfāriqīn), who states explicitly that this is the end of the extra Aristotelian material he had decided to add.

– Extra materials appear after the appendices (148–149 Maróth ξ): 1) an anecdote depicting seven philosophers exchanging aphorisms in a golden temple, concluded by a saying attributed to Socrates³⁵; 2) al-Ḥaṭīmī’s epistle on al-Mutanabbī.³⁶

2 The Epistolary Novel of Aristotle and Alexander

Apart from a letter of Alexander’s father, Philip of Macedonia, to Aristotle, all the letters are exchanges between Aristotle and Alexander, the letters of Alexander being shorter. Darius and Porus, respectively kings of Persia and India,³⁷ appear only as recipients of letters for which models are provided by Aristotle to Alexander, as if Aristotle was playing the role of an advisor and a secretary at the same time.³⁸ The presence of Darius and Porus provide an objective link to the Pseudo-Callisthenes *Alexander Romance*, where both kings played a central role. This text – presumably composed in the third- or fourth- century Roman empire from earlier disjoint elements – was well-known in the Middle Ages in multi-

mary of the gnomology and 652 for its possible provenance).

32 ḤUNAYN IBN ISHĀQ, *Ādāb al-Falāsifa*, 86 Badawī, improperly stating that the formula “I greet you with a customary greeting, but not with an affectionate one”, appeared at the end of the letter, while we find it in the *Epistolary Novel of Aristotle and Alexander* at the beginning of the letter (this mistake may have emanated from al-Anṣarī, who re-arranged the material and created the version of the *Ādāb al-Falāsifa* we possess today).

33 Cf. GRIGNASCHI, “Roman” (n. 6), 120–121.

34 M. C. LYONS, *An Arabic Translation of Themistius Commentary on Aristotles De Anima*, London 1973.

35 Cf. *Ādāb al-Falāsifa*, 48–49 Badawī, for a different anecdote involving philosophers in a golden temple.

36 Maróth studied al-Ḥātimī’s epistle without publishing the treatise in M. MARÓTH, “Aristoteles Pseudo-Philosophus”, *AantHung* 48 (2008), 73–78. For editions of this treatise, see the complete bibliography in B. GRÜNDLER, “In Aristotle’s Words... Al-Ḥātimī’s (?) Epistle on al-Mutanabbī and Aristotle”, in: F. Opwis and D. Reisman (eds.), *Islamic Philosophy, Science, Culture, and Religion: Studies in Honour of Dimitri Gutas*, Leiden/New York, 89–129. A short extract was translated by F. ROSENTHAL, *The Classical Heritage in Islam*, London 1975, 261–263.

37 They should be considered as rhetorical masks (*personae*) for Darius [III] (r. 336–330 BC) and Porus, (r. 340–317?). These explicit references to characters, letters and events appearing in the Pseudo-Callisthenes occur only in *Letter VIII*.

38 Early authorities such as al-Mas’ūdī (d. 957) reporting from al-Kalbī (d. ca. 820) know Aristotle as “Alexander’s vizier” (AL-MAS’ŪDĪ, *Murūğ al-ḍahāb*, II, p. 134 Barbier de Meynard-Pavé de Courteilles/§558, 276 Pellat).

ple translations and versions, the extent of its diffusion comparing only with that of the Bible.³⁹

In 2006, Miklós Maróth published an *editio princeps* of the text, based on the two manuscripts discovered by Walzer and Minovi.⁴⁰ Working with microfilms, the Hungarian scholar was not able to provide a precise description of the manuscripts, which at the time were almost impossible to see *in loco*. Nevertheless, Maróth's edition is the result of an immense scholarly effort. At time, Maróth took into account the parallel versions of some of the fragments as they can be found in Miskawayh's *al-Ḥikma al-ḥalīda* and al-Mubaššir ibn Fātik's *Muḥtār al-ḥikam*.⁴¹ This leaves aside some important parallels discovered and partly studied by Grignaschi, Bielawski, Stern, Doufīkar-Aerts, and Zuwiyya, which all await comprehensive studies.⁴²

Following in the steps of Grignaschi, who had noticed that some of the material in the collection could be compared to classical rhetoric, Maróth demonstrates in detail that most letters and epistles in the *Epistolary Novel* closely follow the rules of Greek epistolography.⁴³ He argues that the original "novel in letters" must stem from pre-Islamic Syria, maybe some time during the sixth century, when the influence of Greek rhetorical schools on Christians was still effective.⁴⁴

39 Overview of the numerous versions of the Pseudo-Callisthenes in JOUANNO, *Naissance* (n. 17), 9, and R. STONEMAN, "Primary Sources for the Classical and Early Medieval Periods", in: Zuwiyya *Companion* (n. 17), 1–20, esp. 3–10. For a recent survey of the Greek papyri related to Alexander's (fictional) correspondence and the Pseudo-Callisthenes, see T. WHITMARSH, "Addressing Power: Fictional Letters Between Alexander and Darius", in: O. Hodkinson, P.A. Rosenmeyer and E. Bracke (eds.), *Epistolary Narratives in Ancient Greek Literature*, Leiden/Boston 2013, 169–186.

40 MARÓTH, *Correspondence* (n. 7), 2–4.

41 On 'Aristotle's Admonitions' (*Letter I*), see MARÓTH, *Correspondence* (n. 7), 26–34 (Arabic text, MARÓTH, *Correspondence*, 12–19), who points to Christian and Stoic concepts and demonstrate convincingly that the text must have been an independent treatise, composed on the model of the *Golden Verses*, with which it seems to have been circulating. Maróth adds that the contents are made (though not exclusively) of *gnōmai*. Maróth does not go as far as Gutas who offers to separate this letter from the others and to consider it not as a letter but as "Gnomology 1" in the collection (see GUTAS, "Graeco-Arabic" (n. 19), 61). See further *infra*, part III.

42 In particular, the epistolary extracts preserved in Ḥunayn and in 'Umara ibn Zayd have not been studied. As pointed out by Plezia and Bielawski (cf. *Lettres* (n. 11)), the gnomology of Ḥunayn uses quotes from *Letter X*. Considering that Ḥunayn's gnomology was extensively used in turn by the authors of the *Šiwān al-Ḥikma* (on the problems related to the authority of the lost *Šiwān al-ḥikma*, see F. GRIFFEL, "On the Character, Content, and Authorship of *Imām Tatimmat Šiwān al-ḥikma* and the Identity of the Author of *Muntakhab Šiwān al-ḥikma*", *JAOS*, 133 (2013), 1–20, and E. COTTRELL, "Abū Sulaymān al-Sijistānī al-Manṭiqī", in: H. Lagerlund (ed.), *Dictionary of Medieval Philosophy*, Dordrecht 2011, I, 17–20, both including the early bibliography).

43 MARÓTH, *Correspondence* (n. 7), 10–23.

44 MARÓTH, *Correspondence* (n. 7), 40, 47, 74–77. J. W. WATT, *Rhetoric and Philosophy from Greek into Syriac*, Ashton 2010, has now amply demonstrated that this tradition remained alive as late as the Xth and XIth c. in the Syriac curriculum. The Ps.-Callisth. (I 18 and I 23) figures among the examples used by Anthony of Takrit in his treatise on rhetoric's, see J.W. WATT, *The Fifth Book of the Rhetoric of Anthony of Tagrit*, Leuven 1986, transl. 65 and 68 and J.W. WATT, "Grammar, rhetoric, and the enkyklios paideia in Syriac", *ZDMG* 143 (1993), 45–71, at 62 [article I of the aforementioned reprint]. The reference made by Anthony (cf. WATT, *Fifth*, 65, n. 119) to an "Arethas" as the author of a poem on Alexander paraphrased according to the allegorical method should be further investigated.

Where Grignaschi saw the influence of Syrian hermetists, especially in *Letter VIII*, Maróth suggests that a Christian translator working at the Umeyyad court could have been subject to Iranian and Hermetic influences. He underlines, similarly to Grignaschi and Stern before him, the fact that the *Siyāsa al-‘āmmiyya* (i. e. *Letter VIII*) and other texts in the *Epistolary Novel* may have been inserted and expanded from other sources.

2.1 *The Contents*⁴⁵

On the Incitation to study philosophy (Fī al-ḥitt ‘alā ta‘allum al-falsafa)

Invitation [by Philip of Macedonia] to Aristotle to educate Alexander (Fī istiqdām Aristū li-ta‘līm al-Iskandar)

Answer to the Invitation (Ġawāb al-istiqdām)

Moral epistle (Risāla aḥlāqiyya)

Covenant of Aristotle for Alexander (‘Ahd Aristūṭālīs ilā al-Iskandar)

Aristotle’s Congratulations [to Alexander] for the conquest of Scythia and it is a Western country (Tahni’a bi-faṭḥ Suqūṭiyya wa hiya <min?> bilād al-mağrib)⁴⁶

Aristotle’s Congratulations [to Alexander] for the conquest of Anfisan in Babylonia (Tahni’a bi-faṭḥ Anfīsān bilād Bābil)

Letter on General Policy, organised in chapters (Kitāb fī al-siyāsa al-‘āmmiyya mufaṣṣalan)

Request by Alexander for Counsel on the Organisation of the Kingdom, to be made into a compendium (Istiṣārat al-Iskandar fī tadbīr al-mulk bi-qawl muğmal)

Answer and Congratulations for the Conquest of Persia (al-Ġawāb wa tahni’a bi-faṭḥ Fārs)

Request of advice on the killing of the Persian nobility (al-Istiṣāra fī qitl dawī al-aḥṭār min al-Furs)

Answer forbidding him such act (al-Ġawāb yamna‘uhu min dālika)

[Aristotle’s] Congratulations [to Alexander] for the Conquest of the provinces of Khorasan (Tahni’a bi-faṭḥ a‘māl Khurāsān)

The Golden one [Epistle] on the Description of the World, and that it is better than the Golden House⁴⁷ **seen in India** (al-Ḍahabiyya fī šifāt al-‘alām wa annahā aḥsan min bayt al-ḍahab al-muṣāhid fī bilād al-Hind)

Letter of Intercession (Risāla šifā‘iyya)

Selection from the funeral oraisons (Mā taḥayyara min al-mirāfi)

45 Due to lack of space I am unable to comment on each of the letters. This will hopefully be the object of a forthcoming contribution. The titles given here are the ones given in the table of contents. They often differ from the titles we read within the text, usually simply an introduction followed directly by the text, eventually preceded with “its copy (*nushatuhā*)”, or “the letter (*al-kitāb*).”

46 The addition “and it is a Western country” could also be understood (without *min*) as “and it is the Western countries”. This would correspond to the geography of Alexander’s conquests according to the Pseudo-Callisthenes.

47 The expression used in Arabic may refer to either a house (or a palace, or any construction) made of gold, or to one containing gold.

2.2 The review of Miklos Maróth's edition by Dimitri Gutas

In his review of Maróth's edition, Gutas rejects the very possibility that the text should be called an 'epistolary novel'.⁴⁸ It is hard to argue that *some* readers may have taken the letters as a genuine correspondence although they lack anything that resembles Aristotle's scientific treatises, except for the *De Mundo*. The fact remains that what is in our possession today is an 'epistolary novel,' at least from the modern reader's point of view, and it was assembled with this purpose by at least one compiler, *qua* author. An anonymous narrator went as far as to provide transitions between the letters even though these may at time contradict the letters' contents. This anonymous redactor might have been different than the compiler of the letters, but answering this question will necessitate further study. Some of these 'transitions' should be considered as mere 'descriptive titles', as will be shown below. In most cases, they simply offer a summary of the letter they introduce. In other instances, they seem to summarize missing letters and events.

In turn, to Gutas' credit, literature scholars have not reached any agreement on the category 'epistolary novel' and some would like to see it apply solely to modern novels, composed exclusively of letters. The term 'fringe novels' which Gutas seems to favor has been applied to texts as diverse as Xenophon's *Cyropaedia* and Apuleius' *Metamorphoses*. It has for this reason raised the suspicion of many, especially when discussing a novel *in letters*.⁴⁹ Recent studies on the typology of Greek epistolary novels and epistolary 'fictions' leave no doubt that one should apply this label to the Pseudo-Aristotelian *Epistolary Novel*.⁵⁰ As mentioned earlier, Grignaschi himself has called the work a "roman épistolaire" in all his publications. In English, both "epistolary romance" and "epistolary novel" have been used to describe the text, the former by Faustina Doufikar-Aerts and by Gutas, and the latter by Maróth, who also called it "the novel in letters," probably in order to avoid being involved in the debate referred to by Gutas in his review. For the sake of clarity, I suggest calling our text the "*Epistolary novel of Aristotle and Alexander*" rather than "*Epistolary 'cycle'*" as suggested by Gutas in his review, or "*Epistolary romance*". The former does not take sufficient account of the parallel extracts of the text known from other sources, while the latter might be confused with that of "*Alexander Romance*", commonly used for the different versions of the Pseudo-Callisthenes, a work that comprises quite a number of letters as well.⁵¹

48 GUTAS, "Graeco-Arabic" (n. 19), 66. Gutas himself called the *Epistolary Novel* an 'epistolary romance', in his "Spurious" (n. 28), 31.

49 GUTAS, "Graeco-Arabic" (n. 19), 66. A volume edited by G.A. KARLA, *Fiction on the Fringe: Novelistic Writing in the Post-Classical Age*, Leiden 2009 features contributions questioning squarely the use of this category. See for example, H. MORALES, "Challenging Some Orthodoxies: The Politics of Genre and the Ancient Greek Novel", in: G.A. Karla (ed.), *Fiction on the Fringe: Novelistic Writing in the Post-Classical Age*, Leiden 2009, 1–12.

50 N. HOLZBERG (ed.), *Der griechische Briefroman. Gattungstypologie und Textanalyse*, Tübingen 1994. N. HOLZBERG, *The Ancient Novel: An Introduction*, London/New York 1995.

51 On which see JOUANNO, *Naissance* (n. 17), 19–20, with reference to Merkelbach and Pfister. See further, P.A. ROSENMEYER, *Ancient Epistolary Fictions: The Letter in Greek Literature*, Cambridge 2001, 169–192.

3 Gutas's re-classification of the material

In his review of Maróth's edition, Gutas suggested a new classification for the sixteen letters, narratives and transitions contained in the *Epistolary Novel of Aristotle and Alexander*. The new numbering scheme he offers consists in reorganizing the material into fourteen letters, ten narratives and two gnomologies.⁵² We believe that Gutas' suggestion should be discarded. Not only the use of Grignaschi, Stern, Doufikaer-Aerts and Maróth's studies would be made more difficult, but his classification is plainly misleading, as it does not take enough account of the parallels found in other sources and what they tell us of the origins of the material once compiled into the *Epistolary Novel*.

First of all, what Gutas suggests to consider as "gnomologies", rather than epistles encompassing gnomological extracts should first be established as fitting in this category. As was amply demonstrated by Franz Rosenthal and Dimitri Gutas himself, biographies and doxographies as received and transmitted in Arabic during the Middle Ages make an ample use of sayings (real and forged), of aphorisms, and of anecdotes.⁵³ In turn, gnomologies may be composed of *gnōmai*, of *chreiai*, and of extracts from letters, which all may eventually be re-used in thematic compositions.⁵⁴ Even within *chreiai* (anecdotes), we find anecdotes leading to a high point usually represented by either a wise aphorism or a series or exchange of maxims. An anecdote serving as a mere setting for aphorisms should not be considered as a pure gnomology. This qualification should be reserved in my mind for simple collections of sayings, thematic or not. These collections are generally not given within a narrative context.

Turning to the letters and testaments ascribed to the famous sages, it is not uncommon in spurious letters to find a famous saying used as a caution for credibility. To come full circle, epistles and testaments may be used to compose biographies when historical information is lacking.⁵⁵ Eventually, all of the aforementioned material: forged letters, anecdotes, aphorisms, doxographical extracts and testaments may be used in the composition of encomiums.⁵⁶

It is probable, as Adrados points out, that the main gnomological collections were composed already during the Hellenistic times, and that the constant expansion and recycling of the ancient materials leave us today with texts for which no accurate understanding will

52 GUTAS, "Graeco-Arabic" (n. 19), 65.

53 See, inter alia, F. ROSENTHAL, *Das Fortleben der Antike im Islam*, Zürich 1965 [Engl. Tr., *The Classical Heritage in Islam*, London 1975]; F. ROSENTHAL, *Greek Philosophy in the Arab World: A Collection of Essays*, Aldershot 1990; D. GUTAS, *Greek Philosophers in the Arabic Tradition*, Aldershot 2000.

54 A. MOMIGLIANO, *The Development of Greek Biography*, Cambridge (Mass.)/London 1993, 53; 2–73. Cf. J.-P. MAHÉ, *Hermès en Haute-Egypte*, Laval 1982, II, 278–308. D. GUTAS, *Greek Wisdom Literature in Arabic Translation*, New Haven 1975, 452–453 (the "gnomology" edited and translated by Gutas in this work contains several extracts from pseudepigraphic Pythagorean, Platonic and Aristotelian letters). In the *Pseudo-Hippocratic Letters*, the famous *Letter XVII* on melancholy uses the first of Hippocrate's *Aphorisms*, "Life is Short, and the Art is Long," thus providing us with another example connection between epistolographical and gnomological material.

55 The device is constantly used by Diogenes Laertius (3rd c.) in his *Lives and Opinions of Eminent Philosophers*.

56 MARÓTH, *Correspondence* (n. 7), 45–46. See further G.A. KENNEDY, *Progymnasmata: Greek Textbooks of Prose Composition and Rhetoric*, Atlanta 2003, 81–83; C.A. GIBSON, *Libanius' Progymnasmata: Model Exercises in Greek Prose Composition and Rhetoric*, Atlanta 2008, 195–197.

ever be reached.⁵⁷ Moreover, the practices of the rhetorical schools in the centuries immediately preceding the ascent of Islam still need supplementary research. One should be aware of the extremely diverse, at time multi-lingual documents we possess for the wide area which became “Hellenized” in the aftermaths of Alexander’s conquests. All the aforementioned genres figure prominently in rhetorical exercises, so that it is for us impossible to decide whether some of the works transmitted were genuine authorial compositions or simply reflect schools practices.⁵⁸

With this framework in mind, should the Pythagorean *Golden Verses*, to quote a “testament” considered as comparable to those of Plato and Aristotle – at least by Miskawayh – be considered a gnomology, simply because several of its verses have achieved fame? What Gutas suggests to consider as two gnomologies (**Gnomology 1** and **Gnomology 2**, in his classification, *Letter V* and *Letter XVI* according to the traditional ordering) have not yet been thoroughly studied, and the brief references he gives to support his thesis do not add up to a demonstration. We would like to pick two examples in order to show that the insertion of the gnomologies in his numbering scheme is not justified.

In his commentary on “**Gnomology I**” (= *Letter V* of the standard classification), Gutas gives the title *Aristotle’s Admonitions to Alexander in the presence of Philip*⁵⁹ and points to Grignaschi has having shown a Persian origin.⁶⁰ The title itself seems to follow what we read in the introductory sentence of *Letter V*, almost certainly written by the author of the transitions between the letters: “This is the testament/covenant of Aristote to Alexander, in the presence of his father (*hādīhi waṣiyyat Aristū li-l-Iskandar bi-ḥaḍrati abīhi*)”. There is therefore no trace of the plural *waṣāyā*, and the singular would certainly not be used for ‘admonitions’ (for which one would expect *wa’z* or *naṣā’ih*) here. This title complies with the one found in the table of contents, where the text is given as a ‘*Ahd Aristūālīs ilā al-*

57 F.R. ADRADOS, *Greek Wisdom Literature and the Middle Ages: The Lost Greek models and Their Arabic and Castilian Translations*, Bern 2009. The author’s understanding of the medieval Spanish translations of such works as the *Ādāb al-Falāsifa* and the *Muḥtār al-ḥikam* should nevertheless be taken with caution, because of his tendency to consider them as deriving from single, coherent treatises and collections.

58 The Pseudo-Callisthenes, and its romanticized version of Alexander’s adventures has been circulating with collections of maxims and anecdotes where the Macedonian king and Aristotle appear among other figures. See JOUANNO, *Naissance* (n. 17), 32; 307–309; M. GRIGNASCHI, “La Figure d’Alexandre et sa genèse”, *Arabic Sciences and Philosophy* 3 (1993), 205–234, on 207–209. On wisdom collections, see T. MORGAN, *Literate Education in the Hellenistic and Roman World*, Cambridge 1998, 120–140; T. MORGAN, “Encyclopaedias of Virtue? Collections of sayings and stories about wise men in Greek”, in: J. König and G. Woolf (eds.), *Encyclopaedism from Antiquity to the Renaissance*, Cambridge 2013, 108–128, esp. 108–116.

59 GUTAS, “Graeco-Arabic” (n. 19), 61, §8.

60 This reference to Grignaschi in GUTAS, “Graeco-Arabic” (n. 19), 68, n. 12, is misleading. Grignaschi simply states (“Roman” (n. 6), 109) that “in the *Waṣāyā*, or advices of Aristotle to Alexander, we find maxims inspired from the Persian *andarz*, or political maxims,” and the note quoted by Gutas, “Graeco-Arabic”, barely refers to Cheikh’s edition of the text where the possible sources are not addressed. In the same vein, one could claim a ‘Persian provenance’ to Boethius’ *Consolation of Philosophy*, because of a few universal aphorisms we can read there too. The way Persian material is strongly intertwined with Byzantine material in *Letter VIII* is discussed by Grignaschi all through his commentary to his edition of the letter (see GRIGNASCHI, “Siyāsa al-‘ammiyya” (n. 5), introduction 33–96 and notes 198–287).

Iskandar, i.e. ‘Testament/Covenant of Aristotle for Alexander’.⁶¹ What should have been emphasised by Gutas is that the long narrative (*Narrative 3* in Gutas’ classification) introducing the text states explicitly that this testament/covenant (*‘ahd*) was composed by Aristotle at the request of the dying Philip, after the renewal of the designation of Alexander as official heir to the throne and his public coronation.⁶² The testament/covenant is introduced in the narrative as a rhetorical wonder, since Philip has asked Aristotle to compose a text that would simultaneously contain useful advice for Alexander and a farewell to the king as he is about to depart from this world.⁶³

In his brief comments on the parallel text preserved in Miskawayh (*al-Ḥikma al-ḥālida*, pp. 219–224 Badawī) and Ibn Fātik (*Muḥtār al-ḥikma*, pp. 186–191 Badawī), Gutas refers to the dozen pages long commentary of Maróth on *Letter V* (= *Gnomology I* of Gutas’ classification), without any mention of the setting of the text in the different witnesses. In this regard, he fails to mention the possible role of the Pythagorean *Golden Verses*, given by Miskawayh as Pythagoras’ *Testament* (*waṣīyya*), as a model for the text which appear in the *Epistolary Novel* as *Letter V*, although this point was underlined by Maróth.⁶⁴ The text belongs in Miskawayh’s *al-Ḥikma al-Ḥālida* to a series of such testaments or speeches, each given as a *waṣīyya*, starting with that of Plato to his disciple Aristotle, continuing with Aristotle’s to Alexander, and culminating (in a somehow chaotic chronology) with the first part of the Pseudo-Pythagorean *Golden Verses*.⁶⁵ These stylistically related ‘testaments’

61 *‘Ahd* belongs to the vocabulary of Sālim Abū al-‘Alā’ and of ‘Abd al-Ḥamīd (see ‘ABBĀS, ‘*Abd al-Ḥamīd* (n. 7), 215sq. for the famous ‘*Ahd Marwān ilā ibnihi ‘Ubayd Allāh*, by ‘Abd al-Ḥamīd, often considered as the first ‘mirror for prince’ of Islamic literature, and 315.12 for the use of the term by Sālim). From ‘covenant, testament’ the use of the term widened to designate an ‘oath’ and a ‘contract’ (for the *Hippocratic Oath*, known alternatively as the *Aymān* and the ‘*Ahd*, see (forthcoming) E. COTTRELL, ‘*Sīrat Buqrāṭ fī al-maṣādir al-‘arabiyya: ḥayātuhu, rasā’iluhu, wa al-qasam al-maṣhūr*’ (in Arabic), in: P. Koetschet and P. Pormann (eds.), *Ġudūr al-ṭibb al-‘arabī fī al-qurūn al-wusṭā*, Beirut 2015).

62 His first designation as heir to the throne was made by Philip in the narrative introducing *Letter IV* (= *Narrative 2* of Gutas’ classification, ‘Graeco-Arabic’, 60), but this element has been left out from Gutas’ summary. The use of a similar device (a ‘coronation speech’) to introduce two different epistles show that our compiler did not have much imagination, and/or that one of the epistles is a not-so-skillful interpolation.

63 For this reason, *Narrative 3* in Gutas’ classification should simply be considered as the introduction to *Letter V* (standard classification), as suggested in his time by GRIGNASCHI, ‘Roman’ (n. 6), 223–225.

64 MARÓTH, *Correspondence* (n. 7), 26–27, points to the *Golden Verses* as a possible model for what he considers as an ethical collection. Both Maróth and Gutas failed to mention the parallel with the *Muntaḥab Šiwān al-ḥikma*, §52, 42, ll. 730–736 Dunlop (only the first eight lines of *Letter V*, cf. Maróth §, pp. 12–13) and id., §67, 51, ll. 964–965 Dunlop (only the first line, introduced as a speech composed by Aristotle at Philip’s request for Alexander’s armies – ‘*ahd al-jundiyya*’ – in the occasion of his coronation). In the first occurrence, the testament is given to Alexander by a dying Aristotle, while in the second, the context is that of the *Epistolary Novel* and of Philip’s disease, with the additional detail that Philip ordered Aristotle to compose a ‘speech for the armies’ (*‘ahd al-jundiyya*). This multiple use of a similar material is a strong indication that the text has been known for a long time.

65 Miskawayh (*al-Ḥikma al-Ḥālida*, 220 Badawī) has a shortened introduction, stating that the text is the ‘Covenant/Testament (*waṣīyya*) of Aristotle to Alexander, when Philip’s disease worsened and that he had transmitted power (*taqarrara al-amr*) to his son Alexander’. Many other pre- and post-Islamic *waṣīyya* and *waṣāyā* extracts are gathered by Miskawayh in his book, and he may at time have used the word as mere equivalents of ‘speech’ (Gr. *logos*, pl. *logoi*). Cheikho’s edition of the text is made after

consist in a series of spurious diatribes where Aristotle and Plato are attributed the religious tendencies expressed in the *Golden verses* and a strong inclination to asceticism (which Aristotle advises Alexander to follow!). Maróth identifies the trend as Christian and shows convincingly that the text is extremely well composed: a short introduction in which the author seems to apologize for daring to give advice to the sovereign; a section on God, with a vocabulary heavily reminiscent of the Qurʾān; followed by a section on the relations between rulers (*imām*-s!) and their subjects, concluded by sections on the virtues to be cultivated by rulers, with an emphasis on knowledge and justice. Alexander is exhorted to fight his lower inclinations (*šahwāt*), his anger (*ḡaḏab*), and advised not to lie. Stylistically, the ‘letter’ is rythmed with addresses such as “And know that... (*wa i ‘lam*)”, before a series of “O Alexander (*yā Iskandar*)”, followed by obscure pseudo-Homeric quotations. These extremely weak quotations – which appear in other letters of the *Epistolary Novel* – have not been traced to any Homeric or Pseudo-Homeric work, and they usually seem to be inserted to restate what has just been formulated in a (lousy) aphoristic manner.⁶⁶ We read for example: “The poet Homer said: ‘There is nothing lower than a lie; and nothing good comes from a liar’,” (16 Maróth ٩/Miskawayh 223 Badawī/Grignaschi, Appendix II, 257, n° V) as a conclusion for the same idea just expressed:

“Guard yourself from lying (*wa iyyāka wa-l-kidb*), because lying is nothing but a disgrace of the soul, and feeble-mindedness of opinion, and ignorance of the consequences of the harms caused by lies on who proffers them...” (16 Maróth ٩/Miskawayh 223 Badawī/Grignaschi).

The so-called “testament” of Plato offers striking parallels with the one composed by Aristotle at Philip’s request.⁶⁷ Next to the ascetic themes (good deeds, avoiding the wrong people, cultivating wisdom, insistence on the Hereafter and the avoidance of worldly pleasure as a preparation for it...), the vocabulary shows expressions which certainly remind Christian literature, as was already noted by Maróth. Christian expressions abound in the three “testaments”, sharing other stylistic features such as the use of emphatic state of the verb

MS Vatican 408, a copy of *al-Hikma al-Halīda* used as well by Badawī for his edition (appearing as ف in his apparatus). It is unclear to me what manuscript is designated by Maróth with letter و in the variant readings he provides for *Letter V*: these variants correspond neither to Cheikho’s text nor to Ibn Fātik’s. It should be mentioned here that the *Golden Verses* translation (vv. 1–8) transmitted partially by Miskawayh (*al-Hikma*, 225–226 Badawī) as Pythagoras’ covenant (*waṣīyya*) is identical to the one used by the author of the translation of (Pseudo-) Iamblichus’ *Commentary on the Golden Verses*, see H. DAIBER, *Neuplatonische Pythagorica in arabischem Gewande. Der Kommentar des Iamblichus zu den Carmina aurea. Ein verlorener griechischer Text in arabischer Überlieferung*, Amsterdam/New York 1995. Compared to Hunayn’s translation (which he included in the *Ādāb al-Falāsifa*, 116–119 Badawī), it has been adorned with an Islamic vocabulary making its precepts reminiscent of the prophetic *sunna*. The same inclination can be found in the vocabulary used in Aristotle’s (or rather, Philip’s) covenant.

66 Grignaschi, “Roman” (n. 6), Appendix II, 256–261, provides an edition and translation of the Pseudo-Homeric maxims as they appear throughout the *Epistolary Novel*. Grignaschi did not mention the fact that these Pseudo-Homeric quotes go through several other treatises in MS Köprülü 1608. Ibn Fātik’s version of *Letter V* drops the pseudo-Homeric quotations altogether, unless it witnesses to a version which had not yet integrated them.

67 Preliminary study by A. ARBERRY, “Plato’s testament to Aristotle”, *BSOAS* 34.3 (1971), 475–490, noticing the parallel with al-Mubaššir ibn Fātik, 140–143 Badawī; see further GUTAS, *Greek* (n. 51), 358–363.

(with the *nūn*-suffix) and a highly-stylized classical prosody making use of short sentences and alliterations. The Christian influences may at time be difficult to distinguish from the Islamic one, a phenomenon which can be expected in Arabic texts of the eighth century. Thus, next to “Do not judge a preceptor on his wide knowledge but on the absence of evil in him”, or “Do not ask God for what is of short-time benefit, but ask him for what will be of permanent grace, because He is the bestower of all things” (in “Plato’s ‘testament’”), we read in Philip’s covenant as written by Aristotle (= “Aristotle’s ‘testament’”): “God – may His mention be exalted – only wishes for Himself the same He expects from humans (*al-nās*)”.

These few remarks prove without any doubt that the piece is a late forgery, as was amply demonstrated by Maróth, pointing to several non-Aristotelian features in the midst of Stoic conceptions and a Christian vocabulary which may have been that of the translator. The exhortations attributed to Aristotle in *Letter V* are almost certainly by another pen than *Letters I–IV*, as nothing in it can be found that would relate to classical literature on the Macedonian. Aristotle calling Alexander to think solely about the Hereafter and on avoiding sinning and lying are certainly no token of realism. They show us that in Islamic literature, in the same way as in Greek and Latin literature before, Alexander and Aristotle were *personae* used in the composition of rhetorical compositions.⁶⁸ The text itself shows well-organized parts, and has none of the classical features of a gnomology, such as the insertion of anonymous sayings, thematic jumps, or word puns. It may still make use of maxims in a propaedeutic manner, as was suggested by Maróth, but the beginning of the text itself shows that it was conceived as an exhortation:

“The one who orders good is not more fortunate than the one who obeys him, and the pupil does not benefit from science in a smaller way than who is teaching him; neither should the one giving advice be more praised than the one who receives it, when they are compared.⁶⁹ The benefit of your abandoning your passions – despite the pleasures and joys they were giving you – is like the benefit of what people get as a reward in this world.⁷⁰ Because God, glorified and sublime be He, only accepts for Himself from men what He has wished by Himself for them. And indeed, He has granted them His mercy (*rahimahum*), and ordered them mercifulness (*tarāhum*); He told them truth (*ṣadiqahum*), and ordered them to be truthful (*al-taṣāduq*); He was generous to them, and ordered them to be generous; He pardoned them and ordered them forgiveness. Therefore, He accepts from them only the exact same He has given them, and He does not permit them differently than what He came towards them with (*mā ātā ilayhim*). So give to whom depends on you (*man walayta amruhu*) of your pity (*raʿfa*),⁷¹ of your mercifulness, and your forgiveness in the same extent you desire it from your Lord, because if you give this from whom you rely

68 MARÓTH, *Correspondance* (n. 7), 17.

69 The last part of the sentence is modified according to the reading of the *Muntaḥab Šiwān al-ḥikma*, §52, 42, l. 731 Dunlop.

70 The preceding sentence is omitted in the *Muntaḥab* and in Miskawayh.

71 *Raʿfa* belongs to the vocabulary of Sālim Abū al-ʿAlāʾ, see ʿABBĀS, ʿAbd al-Ḥamīd (n. 7), 315 (Letter n°4, where we read “*fa-aḥmidū Allāh rabbakum al-raʿf bikum*” the attribution is slightly uncertain but ʿAbbās suggests to ascribe it to Sālim).

upon (*yalī amraka*), you will [give] it liberally (*mawfūr*). And know that you do not possess anything but what you have gained in good reputation (*jamīl al-dīkr*) and the satisfaction of the creator (*riḏwān al-ḥalīq*), and that if you trust Him as having a right on you, He will preserve you from the evil of lesser than Him, while if you trust another than Him, you will not be able to defend yourself nor will anyone be able to defend you.” (*Correspondence*, 12–13 Maróth ξ).

There is simply nothing here that recalls a gnomology, *pace* Gutas, even though gnomologies could easily be composed from this kind of letter, which itself makes use of common morals widely found in the form of maxims. It may also be compared to what seems to be an independent piece inserted in *Letter VIII* as a “Speech to the Ephesians” by Plato (!).⁷² In style and contents, this type of exhortation may be related with Late Antique collections where pagan philosophers are transformed into monotheist ascetics, known also in Syriac literature.⁷³ At the same time, one cannot speak of a determined Christian influence, because the vocabulary is already the Islamic one, albeit still in its formative stage.⁷⁴

Turning to what Gutas identifies as “**Gnomology 2**” (*Letter XVI* of the standard classification) namely the “Laments of philosophers upon Alexander’s death”, according to his own translation, we are here closer to the familiar features of a gnomology.⁷⁵ But the series of sayings is expressly set as a conclusion for the novel, and it is preceded as such by a short introductory narrative. The narrative (= *Narrative 10* in Gutas’ classification) states:

“And when Alexander was stricken with the illness through which he became desperate,⁷⁶ he wrote to his mother: ‘Make a banquet (ṣanī’), and invite whoever has never been affected by misfortune.’ And when the letter and its contents reached her, she said: ‘Alexander has offered me condolences [on his own death] by himself.’” (*Correspondence*, 132 Maróth ξ)

In the table of contents, the title given adds some relevant precisions:

“What has been selected of the funeral elegies on Alexander: speech by a group of philosophers and by some of the people of his following and retinue (*mā tuḥuyyira min al-marāṭī fī al-Iskandar: qawlu ḡamā’atin min al-falāsifa wa-qawmin min biṭānatihi*).”

The common theme of the sayings (proffered by sages, anonymous speakers, his relatives and his retinue) is the early death of the Macedonian conqueror.⁷⁷ Such collections, in sev-

72 Cf. the text in GRIGNASCHI, “Siyāsa al-‘āmmiyya” (n. 5), chapter XIII, 122–127 and comm. 205.

73 See S.P. BROCK, “A Syriac Collection of Prophecies of Pagan Philosophers”, *OLP* 14 (1983), 203–246 [reprint S.P. BROCK, *Studies in Syriac Christianity. History, Literature and Theology*, Aldershot 1992, chapter VII].

74 The same phenomenon appears in the above-mentioned letter, see ‘ABBĀS, ‘*Abd al-Ḥamīd* (n. 7), 311, where we read that God “chose angels and envoys among the people (*tumma iṣṭafā min al-malā’ika rusulan wa min al-nās*)”.

75 GUTAS, “Graeco-Arabic” (n. 19), 62, §26.

76 See Arr. *An.* VII 27.3.

77 One can notice a parallel figure between the prophecy made by a gymnosophist to Alexander in Arr. *An.* VII 1.6 “And very soon, you too will die, and will possess no more of the earth than suffices for the burial of your body,” and one of the sayings on Alexander’s coffin according to AL-MAKIN (231, n°

eral competing versions, are known in Arabic, Persian, and Syriac, but no Greek or Latin original has been discovered.⁷⁸ The episode nevertheless is always set in the same context: Alexander grieves his mother and asks her to organize his funeral in Alexandria after organizing the transfer of his coffin from Babylonia to Egypt.⁷⁹ These geographical details have disappeared from the short narrative we read in the *Epistolary Novel*. As Olympias has been asked to invite everyone who has never been touched by grief, she finds out that no one turns out.⁸⁰ It is probable that the letter to Olympias has become at some stage the occasion for the insertion of a series of wise sayings.⁸¹ The *Epistolary Novel* is unique in adding immediately before the sayings: “And after he passed away, the people started to mourn him (*raṭāhu*).”

The flexibility of this material shows that rather than a coherent gnomology, which should be expected to be identified as such (*nasāʾih, aqwāl, waṣayā...*), we are dealing with a mobile episode which rhetors (and the secretaries of the early Islamic era who embraced some of their specialties) were able to modify according to their audience and agendas.

4 Conclusion: An Umayyad Mirror for Princes?

The *Epistolary Novel* is almost totally deprived of any reference to the Pseudo-Callisthenes’ *Alexander Romance*, with the exception of *Letter VIII*. Neither do the transitions between the letters allude to the narrative of the events as they unfold (already in a chronological and geographical chaos) in the preserved versions of the Pseudo-Callisthenes. For example, while one would expect *Letter X* to come after the victory on Darius, it is simply

XVI Budge) and AL-MASʾŪDĪ, II, 254 Pavé de Courteilles-Barbier de Meynard/II, 11, §676 Pellat: “You for whom the earth itself was too narrow... how do you feel in the narrowness where you dwell now?”

78 Cf. R. STONEMAN, *Alexander the Great: A Life in Legend*, New Haven 2010², 191–193. One version of the *Laments* preserved in the PSEUDO-THAʿĀLIBĪ, *Taʾrīḥ ġurar al-siyar*, has been translated by ROSENTHAL, *Classical* (n. 50), 120–124. Cf. EUTYCHIUS (83 Cheikho/absent from the Sinai MS edited by Breidy); AL-MASʾŪDĪ (II, 251–257 Pavé de Courteilles-Barbier de Meynard/II, §§675–676 Pellat); AL-MUBAŠŠIR IBN FĀTIK (240–241 Badawī). In none of these versions do the *Laments* follow directly Alexander’s letter to his mother.

79 The letter of Alexander to his mother Olympias is known to us in Greek in only one version, while Ḥunayn ibn Ishāq and the MS Köprülü 1608 have several. Ḥunayn ibn Ishāq, *Ādāb al-Falāsifa*, 91–95 Badawī (two versions) and for Olympias’ speech after she has read the letter, Ḥunayn ibn Ishāq, *Ādāb al-Falāsifa*, 96–97 Badawī. This is followed in Ḥunayn’s collection by three different versions of the *Laments*, see Ḥunayn ibn Ishāq, *Ādāb al-Falāsifa*, 97–110. In MS Istanbul, Köprülü 1608, the letter to Olympias is given in two versions (foll. 2a; 167b) and the *Laments* in two versions as well (foll. 2a; 4a).

80 STONEMAN, *Alexander* (n. 78), 192, points out to Alexander’s riddle as a common motif in Greek literature.

81 The *Laments* are absent from the Syriac version, but they appear in some manuscripts of the Arabic “Life (*Sīra*) of Alexander” discovered by F. Doufkar-Aerts, see F. DOUFKAR-AERTS, “‘The Last Days of Alexander’ in an Arabic Popular Romance”, in: S. Panayotakis, M. Zimmerman and W. Keulen (eds.), *The Ancient Novel and Beyond*, Leiden/Boston 2003, 23–35, where she traces the *Laments* episode to the lost *δ version of the Pseudo-Callisthenes. Among the oriental versions, only the Ethiopic version of al-Makin has a series of laments (see the translation by E.A.W. BUDGE, *The Alexander Book in Ethiopia: The Ethiopic Versions of Pseudo-Callisthenes, the Chronicle of Al-Makin, the Narrative of Joseph ben Gorion, and a Christian Romance of Alexander*, London 1933, 230–232). O.M. DAVIDSON, “The Burden of Mortality: Alexander and the Dead in Persian Epic and Beyond”, in: D. Konstan and K.A. Raaflaub (eds.), *Epic and History*, Malden/Oxford 2010, 212–222, shows the laments influenced most Persian narratives on Alexander.

the “conquest of Persia” which is mentioned in the narrative and the letter. Similarly for *Letter XIV*, which one should expect to follow the victory on Porus, since the explanatory title mentions the riches of India. But the reality is that there is simply no trace of the Persian and Indian kings outside of *Letter VIII*. At the same time, *Letter VIII* cannot simply have been interpolated, because we find in it some Pseudo-Homeric quotes which are characteristic in their simple style and contents, and appear as well in other letters in the *Epistolarly Novel*. These pseudo-Homeric sayings appear throughout MS Köprülü 1608, in texts unrelated, until further research, to the epistolarly novel in sixteen letters. These quotes should be studied keeping at mind the possibility the *Epistolarly Novel* was composed out of several sources and may have been edited or reedited several times.

The central figure in the *Epistolarly Novel* is Aristotle, rather than Alexander. Aristotle is almost absent from the Pseudo-Callisthenes’ novel. This absence may be the result of the belief held by some that Aristotle would have been implied in the plot against Alexander and his following poisoning.⁸² The figure of Aristotle as a secretary, drafting chancellery letters (especially in *Letter VIII*, while in other letters it is mainly for political and tactical advices that his view is sought for), is somehow reminiscent of the cover-letter of the spurious *Rhetoric to Alexander*, where Aristotle announces to his pupil that he is finally sending him the treatise on public speaking which the sovereign has requested at several occasions.⁸³

Both the Pseudo-Callisthenes and Plutarch’s biography of Alexander know several letters by Alexander to a wide collection of correspondents.⁸⁴ But as for Aristotle’s letters, we are left with the spurious cover-letters of the *Rhetoric to Alexander* and the *De Mundo*, and half a dozen allusions in late Greek and Latin writers.⁸⁵ It is possible that Arrian had in his possession a collection of letters by the philosopher. Close to his time, and not far-away from Cappadocia where Arrian composed his *Anabasis*, an Armenian author who translated the Greek Pseudo-Callisthenes’ *Alexander Romance* into Armenian seems to have enjoyed a text where Aristotle was still one of the central character (being attributed the composition of two-third of Book 1).

Mario Grignaschi has probably tried to find in the Pseudo-Callisthenes some explanation for what he was reading in the *Epistolarly Novel* although it was not where it should have been sought for. While he emphasized the role of Sālim Abū al-‘Alā’, he may have neglected the latter’s relation to his relative and protégé ‘Abd al-Ḥamīd al-Kātib (d. 750).⁸⁶

82 Plu. *Alex.* 77 discards the story as “a rumor”. The poisoning narrative is known to the Pseudo-Callisthenes, who points to Antipater as the head of the plot. The [A] manuscript of the Pseudo-Callisthenes gives the name of “Aristotle of Miletus” among Alexander’s preceptors, but this should be considered as a copyist mistake.

83 See the translation by E.S. FORSTER, *De Rhetorica ad Alexandrum*, in: W.D. Ross (ed.), *The Works of Aristotle*, XI, Oxford 1924.

84 For the Pseudo-Callisthenes, version A, see JOUANNO, *Naissance* (n. 17), 42–43, n. 85 ; PLUTARQUE, *Œuvres Morales*, t. V, 1^{ère} partie. *La Fortune des Romains. La Fortune ou la vertu d’Alexandre. La Gloire des Athéniens*, ed. and transl. F. Frazier et C. Froidefond), *Œuvres Morales*, IV, Paris 1990, introd., 11 and list 20–21: some of the letters would have been taken directly from the court’s ephemerids, according to Plutarch.

85 See above, n. 11, for the testimonies and fragments gathered by Plezia.

86 Grignaschi initially ascribed to Sālim the composition of *Letters IV, VIII, XI, XII and XIII*. See his “Quelques” (n. 8), 9 and 15, n. 35. On the elements which led him to ascribe *Letter VIII* to Sālim, see

Both of them probably had access to the material translated for the Umayyad chancellery – of which he had been an employee in Fārs and Kirmān – by their younger contemporary by Ibn al-Muqaffā' (d. 757), who seems to have been a personal acquaintance of 'Abd al-Ḥamīd at some stage.⁸⁷ Although it is commonly stated that Sālīm was a *mawlā* and that he may have been of Persian descent, there is nothing to sustain the claim.⁸⁸ The little we know about him show that he was very close to the caliph, and a senior secretary, having served already under his father, 'Abd al-Malik.⁸⁹ If we believe Ibn al-Nadīm, Sālīm was the translator or the editor of a collection of letters exchanged between Aristotle and Alexander.⁹⁰

The absence of Sālīm's name on the collection of letters could be explained by his role as a secretary in charge with the supervision of translations and possibly subsequent correcting and editing. In this function, he was probably involved in the selection of what would be relevant for both a practical use within the chancellery and for a recreational use during the different type of court meetings. His phraseology, with characteristic long periods, is comparable to the style of most epistles. The fact some of the letters were translations from Greek would easily alter possibilities to identify stylistic characteristics, but some of the letters could bear his mark. As for the role of Ibn al-Muqaffā', it may rather be that the younger secretary borrowed from the senior secretary, but the possibility that his

GRIGNASCHI, "Roman" (n. 6), 223 and of the features that belong to the reign of Hishām b. 'Abd al-Malik, see GRIGNASCHI, "Rasā'il" (n. 6), Appendix I, 53–58. As for *Letter XIII*, GRIGNASCHI, "Roman" (n. 6), 110, considered it was rephrased by Sālīm to insist on the importance of Khorasan for the conquest of Persia, a region where the Umayyads were trying to expand, even though only the introductory narrative mentions Khorasan. MARŌTH (*Correspondence* (n. 7), 23) underlines that the salutation at the end of the letter ("kun ṣāliḥan wa iḥwānuka") is reminiscent of Greek epistolography). GRIGNASCHI, "Siyāsa al-ʿāmmiyya" (n. 5), 74, n. 94, situates the composition of the Arabic *Epistolary Novel* after 737 AD.

87 GRIGNASCHI shows that several expressions of *Letter VIII* belonged to Ibn al-Muqaffā' ("Siyāsa al-ʿāmmiyya" (n. 5), 74, 75, 79 and 215 n. 2 to chapter xxv). MARŌTH (*Correspondence* (n. 7), 87–88; 90) identifies further such expressions.

88 'ABBĀS, 'Abd al-Ḥamīd (n. 7), gathered reports on Sālīm and 'Abd al-Ḥamīd, and edited the extant letters. He states that Sālīm must have been a non-Arab because of his filiation with 'Abd al-Ḥamīd, who was either his brother-in-law or his son-in-law (*hatan*), and a *mawlā*, for whom 'Abbās considers it would have been impossible to marry an Arab woman by the time. But he neglects the possibility Sālīm could have been a Christian. W. AL-QĀḌĪ, "Sālīm Abū al-'Alā," in: J. Scott Meisami and P. Starkey (eds.), *Encyclopaedia of Arabic Literature*, London 1998, II, 681–682 follows 'Abbās and states he was a "non-Arab *mawlā*." For the use of the Qur'ān in 'Abd al-Ḥamīd's prose, cf. R.M.A. ALLEN, *Introduction to Arabic Literature*, Cambridge 2000, 139–140.

89 AL-TABARĪ, in his *History* [Arabic text, VI, §1729, anno 125, De Goeje/English translation C. Hillenbrand, XXVI, 71–72], records the circumstances of the death of Hishām, alluding to the important role played by Sālīm, who was in charge of delivering his remedies to the caliph and attended his death. Tabari adds (Engl. 73), that only Maslama ibn 'Abd al-Malik was allowed to go around with a retinue under the caliphate of Hishām and that according to the same report, Sālīm had ascendancy over Hishām. Moreover, the son of 'Abd al-Ḥamīd was named Ghassān (Engl. 75 and n. 402), which could indicate some proximity with the tribal confederation of the Ghassanids.

90 Cf. supra, 1–2 and notes 6–7. The *Fihrist*'s laconic report on Sālīm may be influenced by the fact Ibn al-Nadīm was a Twelver Shiite while Sālīm played a role in Hishām's dealing with the revolt of Zayd ibn 'Alī's partisans in Kufa. See the letter written by Sālīm on behalf of the caliph to felicitate Yūsuf b. 'Umar after the execution of Zayd b. 'Alī (in 'ABBĀS, 'Abd al-Ḥamīd (n. 7), 318, Letter n°5).

translation from Sasanian materials were read by officials of the chancellery all over the empire is not to be excluded.⁹¹

As Nabia Abbott noted long ago⁹², an Umayyad prince, brother of Hisham b. ‘Abd al-Malik (r. 723–743), Maslama b. ‘Abd al-Malik (lived ca. 685–738),⁹³ retained a special interest in the stories of the conquests of Alexander. It is therefore plausible that he might have ordered the collection of all available evidence related to Alexander and his time. Maslama, as also the religious authorities of the new Arab *oikoumene*, probably had a kin interest in the syncretic figure of “Dhū al-Qarnayn”. The Qur’ānic hero was assimilated by the early Muslim commentators and historians to several figures, among whom Alexander the Macedonian, but also the Parthian king Kisrounis, the South-Arabian Himyarite king Ṣa‘b Ibn al-Harīth, and finally the North-Arabian Lakhmid king al-Mundir ibn Imru al-Qays, for those whose reports have reached us. In Syria too, where the Umayyads had installed their power, different stories on Alexander were certainly known among the multi-lingual speaking communities who constituted, then as now, the mosaic of the population: Aramaic-speakers, Latin- and Greek-speakers, Arabic-speakers, and directly in the vicinity: Armenian- and Persian-speakers. As one would expect new rulers to get familiar with local history and myths, Maslama and the Umayyad court were inevitably exposed to the different legends surrounding Alexander, starting with the different translations of the Pseudo-Callisthenes.⁹⁴

The reign of the Caliph Hishām witnessed the pursuit of the Arabization of the administration and chancellery started under his father. Greek and Middle Persian speaking secretaries were replaced by Arabic speakers and the coinage started to show Arabic instead of Greek and Pehlevi.⁹⁵ At the chancellery, epistolography played an important role: secretaries were in charge of diplomatic correspondence, and they were establishing the new models for administrative exchanges which had only started to be written in Arabic. All these efforts would justify the translation of documents such as those composing the *Epistolary Novel*.⁹⁶

91 Cf. GRIGNASCHI, “Quelques” (n. 8), 14, n. 32. An extract of *Letter VIII* has been traced by I. Kristó-Nagy, as parallel to Ibn al-Muqaffa’s *al-Durra al-Yatima*, cf. I. KRISTÓ-NAGY, *La pensée d’Ibn al-Muqaffa. Un “agent double” dans le monde persan et arabe*, Versailles 2013, 270, n. 864 and 376–383. One may point as well at the redundant use of expressions combining *yā ma’šar*, or *yā ma’āšir* and a real or rhetorical addressee in *Letter VIII*, parallel to IBN AL-MUQAFFA’, *Kitāb al-Manṭiq*, 98, l.7 Daneshpazuh. See further, *infra*, Addenda (2).

92 N. ABBOTT, *Studies in Arabic Literary Papyri*, I: *Historical Texts*, Chicago 1957, 50–56, esp. 55.

93 Maslama was a military commander, who led the jihad against Byzantium and besieged Constantinople and was known for his piety. He could not enter in the succession line because his mother was a slave.

94 These included by the time of the early Umayyads at least a Greek, a Latin, and an Armenian version. The Syriac version of the Pseudo-Callisthenes has not been dated precisely, but it preserves Pagan material that would not be expected in a text written later than the eighth century (allusion to the Biblical Joseph as “an equivalent of the God Serapis”, cf. BUDGE, *History* (n. 26), 39 and lix). Other legends on Alexander were in circulation in Aramaic, in Hebrew and in Syriac, before that date, and the episodes they narrate or on which they elaborate at time tally the sources used by Pseudo-Callisthenes, making the entanglement almost inextricable.

95 D. GUTAS, *Greek Thought, Arabic Culture*, London 1998, 23–24.

96 Among Sālim’s and ‘Abd al-Ḥamīd’s letters preserved for us we find some written at such occasions as *tahni’a*, (congratulations), *fath* (victory), and *ta’ziyya* (mourning), see I. ‘ABBĀS, ‘*Abd al-Ḥamīd*’ (n. 7), letters nos° 25–28; n° 61 (‘Abd al-Ḥamīd) and n° 5 (Sālim). The same vocabulary appears in the titles

Having said that it remains premature to draw a conclusion about the *Epistolary novel*, because the two Istanbul manuscripts are a late selection from a bigger collection. One striking feature, discovered by Maróth, is that most letters belong to the categories of classical Greek epistolography: exhortation, invitation, congratulation, advice, castigation, intercession, and consolation are represented. Maróth provided us with a new methodology in his approach to the text, which will pave the way for a better stylistic analysis of the different letters.⁹⁷ Sorting the original material from the interpolations now seems more feasible, although we should be aware, as in the case of the *Siyāsa al-’āmmiyya* (= *Letter VIII*) that we may also be working with composite sources, multilayered both in their organization and in their origins.

of the sixteen epistles of the *Epistolary Novel* (see above, part 2.1: The Contents). KRISTÓ-NAGY, *Pensée* (n. 91), 247, makes clear that ‘Abd al-Ḥamīd and Ibn al-Muqaffā’ were close friends.

97 MARÓTH, *Correspondence* (n. 7), 13–19. Another positive evidence suggested by MARÓTH, *Correspondence*, 88, and showing a Syrian milieu behind the composition of the letters, is the use of *taba’*, which belongs exclusively to the Syrian dialect until our days, cf. M.W. COWELL, *A Reference Grammar of Syrian Arabic (based on the dialect of Damascus)*, Georgetown 1964, 489–490.

ADDENDA

(1) To note 17: On the epithet “the Two-Horned,” a decisive element was highlighted by K. NAWOTKA, “I Macabees and the Alexander Romance”, forthcoming in the *Proceedings of the International Conference “Classica and Orientalia VII: Historiography of Alexander the Great,” Wrocław, 8th–11th October, 2014*, namely that the assimilation of Alexander as a prophetic figure – if one of a chastiser – is already present in the first lines of I *Macabees*. This explains how the epithet usually associated with Cyrus in Judeo-Christian literature passed to Alexander under the influence of the events of his life as narrated by the historians of Alexander and the reading of these events made in the same circles under the influence of both the *Book of Daniel* and the *Maccabees*. The *Book of Daniel* in particular, was commented repeatedly in Syriac and Arabic. Next to this influence, the syncretistic figure known to the Muslims as “the Two-Horned” was carrying an epithet of Egyptian origin, as was argued by Budge, followed by Rudolf Macuch. See R. MACUCH, “Egyptians Sources and Versions of Pseudo-Callisthenes”, in: L. Criscuolo and G. Geraci, *Egitto e storia antica dall'Ellenismo all'età araba. Bilancio di un Confronto. Atti del Colloquio internazionale, Bologna, 31/8-2/9 1987*, Bologna 1989, 503–511.

(2) To note 91: The famous Indian fables translated and assimilated in Persian, Arabic and Syriac culture under the title *Book of Kalila wa Dimna*, are believed to have been translated from Middle Persian to Arabic by Ibn al-Muqaffa‘ before 750. In the very first pages of the text, in what is considered as the “preface by ‘Alī ibn Shāh” we read a reference to Alexander’s conquests of “the West, Persia, China and India”, unfolding the same sequence of events we can find in the Syriac version of the Pseudo-Callisthenes published by E.A.W. Budge and in the Arabic version of the events of Alexander’s life preserved in the eleventh-century *Choicest Maxims* of al-Mubaššir ibn Fātik. This element added to an allusion to the letters supposedly exchanged between Aristotle and Alexander about the fate of the Persian nobles we find at the beginning of the *Letter of Tansar*, may point to the fact that this was the very same version of the text known to Ibn al-Muqaffa‘. The rendering of the name of the Indian king Porus as Fūr, where the termination seems to have been omitted because it was understood as the Greek declension, is characteristic of the Syriac version and of both al-Mubashshir ibn Fātik’s chapter and of the narratives compiled by the ḥadīth-scholar ‘Umara ibn Zayd (probably in the late 8th c.). KRISTÓ-NAGY, *Pensée* (n. 91), 127–128, p. 136, pp. 153–154, points to common stylistic features between this part of the *Kalila wa Dimna* and other works by Ibn al-Muqaffa‘.

Appendix

What Gutas classifies as “Narrative 1” provides an introduction to the *Epistolary Novel*.¹ It is not clear at this stage of research if it summarizes lost material or simply provides the context for the developing story of Alexander which follows. Three motifs extant in the Pseudo-Callisthenes can be identified in this narrative, but there is no reason to consider them as directly borrowed from the Pseudo-Callisthenes rather than from other classical

1 Gutas summarized “Narrative 1” in five lines in his review of Maroth’s edition, see GUTAS, “Graeco-Arabic” (n. 19), 60, §1.

sources, as they do not show any striking originality.² The “Narrative 1” as it is preserved in the two Istanbul manuscripts represents a slightly abbreviated and emended version of the text preserved in the *Muntaḥab Šiwān al-ḥikma*.³ (§64 Dunlop/152–153 Badawī)

King Alexander, the Two-Horned

“It was said about him that his father was a man from a city⁴ named Macedonia (*Māqādūniyya*), whose name was Philip (*Fīlifūs*), and who belonged to the royal house, something which had befallen on him through his own father. He was a man without progeny and this had begun to be a cause of pressure for him and for the people of his kingdom, for fear that he would die and that his memory would be gone without succession.⁵ For this reason, his anxiety was increasing, as also for the fact that kingship had not been in his family for a long time. He gathered the astrologers (*aṣḥāb al-nuḡūm*) and who had knowledge of calculations (*‘ilm al-ḥisāb*), and whoever thought he had some knowledge in these matters. He asked them to look into his affairs (*al-naẓar fī amrihi*). They agreed on the fact he would be given a son who would be grafted with intelligence (*‘ilm*) and distinction (*šaraf*), who would reach the extremities of the earth (*aqṭār al-arḍ*), and whose kingdom would go beyond that of his father. The king was pleased with this, and he started to wait eagerly for the time that had been announced. And he made sure to have intercourse only with his most noble and his most beautiful concubines. This continued for a while,⁶ until one evening, as he was staying alone, the idea of the transience (*zawāl*) of the world came to him, and what people had told him about the imminence of death (*waṣīk al-riḥla*)... While he was plunged in these thoughts, he saw a great viper (*ḥayya*) rolling next to him in the house. He was frightened and distracted from his thoughts. He then heard someone saying: “O Philip! God has granted you a son who will make your memory alive, and he will be the head of your descendancy.” The snake then disappeared from his sight. He rose in the middle of the night and had intercourse with his dearest concubine, and she was pregnant that very night. She remained preserved [from sights] (*maṣūna*) until she gave birth to the boy.

2 They are: the absence of an heir, the role of the astrologers, and the omen brought by the apparition of a snake.

3 As noticed already by GRIGNASCHI, “Figure” (n. 57), 229.

4 The confusion is not based here on the ambiguity of the Arabic word *balad*, since it is *madīna* which is used (possibly after a scribal correction), thus carrying the limited meaning of “city”.

5 This may be an allusion to the fact there were other pretenders to the Macedonian throne, such as Arrhidaeus and Menelaus. The whole story of Philip’s striving to get a progeny without real interest for his concubines may be an allusion by the author to the sovereign’s famous homosexuality.

6 Instead of what follows, until “On that night” (excluded), the Istanbul manuscripts abbreviate the text with redundant formulations, dropping altogether the apparition of the snake and the oracle: “And as the calculated time had arrived, he was on one evening sleepless and full of anxiety from seeking the promise made to him by the astrologers and the priests. He woke up quickly, thinking about the vanishing (*inqirād*) of the world and what people were telling him of the imminence of death...”

And he [i. e. Philip]⁷ called him “Alexander”.⁸ He [i. e. Alexander] grew up in good condition until he reached the age of seven. [Philip] then ordered for him the professors (*al-mu‘allimīn*) and the rhetors (*al-mu‘addibīn*).⁹ He was born on the thirteenth year of the reign of Darius the Elder, the one who is called Ardashir,¹⁰ the father of Darius the Young, and two years before the end of the reign of *Arsīhu.¹¹ He became king of all the Greeks¹² after he had been king of Macedonia only, and he made peace with this Darius (*Dārā haḏā*)¹³ through a tribute (*ḥaraḡ*)¹⁴ he would

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- 7 This paragraph seems to be redacted as a biography of Philip of Macedonia or as belonging to a longer narrative on Darius III (see below). It does not appear in the *Epistolary Novel*’s introduction and should be considered as an interpolation.
- 8 In Arabic, *Aliskandar* was interpreted as *Al-Iskandar*, identifying the initial two letters as a single word, the Arabic article *al-*. It should be obvious nevertheless that **Aliskandar* is the result of a metathesis where **Aliksandar* was transformed into **Aliskandar*, resulting in a softened pronunciation.
- 9 The following sentence seems to be the unfortunate result of an interpolation taken from *Muntaḥab Šiwān al-ḥikma*, §15, ll. 202–203 Dunlop, where the subject is explicitly mentioned as Alexander. Philip was born in 382 BC and Alexander in 356 BC. Therefore, Philip was born in the 23rd year of Artaxerxes II Memnon, and Alexander, in the 2nd year of Artaxerxes III Ochus. If as in our extract, the subject should actually be Philip, we could think of a mistake between 13th years and 23rd year.
- 10 *Ardašir*, commonly spelled Ardashir in wider publications when referring to the Sasanian king who bore this name, is the Middle-Persian evolution of what can be transliterated **Rtaxšaθra* to represent the way it was pronounced in Old Persian and was transliterated as Artaxerxes in Greek and in most Western languages subsequently. See S.A. ARJOMAND, “Artaxerxes, Ardašir, and Bahman”, *JAOS* 118 (1998), 245–248.
- 11 As it is, the sentence is ambiguous: it could imply that the last king mentioned belonged to a different dynasty, or that a different comput was given after the throne-name. The manuscripts used by Dunlop show different readings: Arsīhawā/Arsīhu/Arsḡū. In his apparatus, Dunlop refers to *Muntaḥab Šiwān al-ḥikma*, §15 for an earlier reference to this king, but Porphyry’s statement (taken from his lost *Philosophical History*, possibly through the intermediacy of Cyril of Alexandria, who is quoted just a few lines before Porphyry) which is partly identical to the formulation we have here starts with a synchronization of Alexander with “Ardashir’s reign” and ends with that of Plato’s death with Arsīhū (= Artaxerxes IV Arses, r. 338–336 BC, i.e. ten years after the commonly accepted time of Plato’s death). The identification with Artaxerxes III Ochus (r. 358–338 BC) is made difficult because neither the dates given would be correct nor the transcription of Greek Okhos would be phonologically satisfying. Bīrūnī correctly transcribes Ochus as *Uḥūs*, in his chronological work, the *Ātār al-Bāqīya*, (ed.) E. SACHAU, *Chronologie Orientalischer Völker von Albēri, Leipzig* 1923, 89, but he names Ochus’ successor and the predecessor of Alexander at the head of the “Chaldean” empire as “Dārīūs ibn Arsīh” (“Darius son of Arses”). Al-Mas‘ūdī, *Tanbīh*, 97–98 De Goeje, points to the Sasanids as the authors of a manipulation aiming at erasing half of the 510 years they knew had passed between Alexander and Ardashīr the First to avoid ruling at a time when Zoroaster had announced the destruction of the world (one thousand years after his prophecy). According to al-Mas‘ūdī, Ardashīr I proclaimed his victory over Artabanus IV as happening in “270 of Alexander”. A telescope between [Artaxerxes IV] Arses and Arsaces I could well have served this purpose.
- 12 Dunlop considers the text as corrupt and adds *bilād*, editing a text meaning: “He ruled <the country> of the Greeks”...
- 13 This expression refers to “the Darius we are speaking about,” i. e. the topic of the general narrative from which this chronology might have been excerpted, as well as the “Darius the Young” just mentioned. The ascension to power of Darius III is an obscure point of Achaemenid history, and the insistence in making him “Darius son of Darius” (*Dārā ibn Dārā*), and “Darius the Young” son of “Darius the Elder” in most of the Arabic sources dealing with Alexander point to late sources where Darius III had been assimilated within the Achaemenid genealogy. On Darius III as an usurper, see nevertheless *Letter VIII*, in GRIGNASCHI, “Siyāsa al-‘āmmiya” (n. 5), 147, 154–155.

give him. He [i. e. Philip] died in the fifth year of the reign of Darius the Young and his son Alexander reigned after him.”¹⁵

14 On the *ḥarāḡ* as a Sasanian institution, cf. GRIGNASCHI, “Quelques” (n. 8), 18, 20; A.-L. DE PREMARE, *Les Fondations de l’Islam. Entre écriture et histoire*, Paris 2002, 188–190.

15 As Darius III is usually considered as ruling from 340 BC onwards, this date is exact (336 BC is the traditional dating of Philip’s death and Alexander’s rise to power).

Alexander's Mirror^{*}

Richard Stoneman (Exeter)

نه هر كه آينه سازد اسكندري داند

Not everyone who makes a mirror knows how to be an Alexander

HAFEZ of Shiraz (d. ca 1388)¹

'Looking at God we should be using the best mirror of mortal things for the virtue of the soul, and thus we should best see and know ourselves'

PLATO, *Alcibiades* 133 c

'Believers are each other's mirrors' – saying of Mohammed²

'I am half sick of shadows, said The Lady of Shalott'

Alfred Lord TENNYSON, 'The Lady of Shalott'

1 Mirrors as 'scientific instruments'

In the 940s AD, the Arab traveller and writer al-Mas'udi visited Alexandria,³ where he acquired both reliable and fabulous information about the founder of the city, Alexander the Great. Two of his stories concern works in the harbour.⁴ When the walls of the city were being built, fierce sea monsters constantly emerged from the harbour and attacked the workmen. In order to put an end to the problem, Alexander had a large wooden box built, six cubits by five, fitted with glass windows and caulked with pitch. In this vessel he had himself lowered into the limpid waters, accompanied by two skilled draughtsmen, whose job it was to make drawings of all the sea-monsters, 'reproducing their hideous aspect, their stature and their various forms'. Back on land, Alexander gathered a team of iron and bronze workers and stone masons to make exact copies of the monsters, which they lined up along the harbourside. When the real monsters next emerged from the sea and caught sight of their mirror images, they were frightened and retreated into the depths, never emerging again to trouble the labourers.

* I should like to thank Earl Banner, Christopher Gill and Leonard Lewisohn for helpful comments on this paper. I am also grateful to audiences in Wrocław and Exeter for their input.

1 I. SALAMI (ed.), *Divan of Hafez*, Tehran 2007, 187 (but the translation is mine).

2 J.C. BÜRCEL, *The Feather of Simurgh: The 'Licit Magic' of the Arts in Medieval Islam*, New York/London 1988, 138.

3 Walters MS W623 fol 89b.

4 AL-MAS'UDI, *Les Prairies d'Or* tr. B. de Meynard and P. de Certeille, Paris 1965, paras. 828-838, II, 314-9. See in general M. SHOUL, *Al-Masudi and his World: A Muslim Humanist and his Interest in non-Muslims*, London 1979.

A second great work constructed by Alexander in the city he founded was the Lighthouse.⁵ (Most authors attributed it to him, though variant views made it the work of Queen Daluka, or of the tenth Pharaoh). The tower was built on top of a giant bronze crab and crowned with bronze statues, one of which followed the course of the sun with its hand, while the other pointed out the direction from which any enemies were approaching. (A third statue chimed the hours). There was also a mirror, which was able to reflect any approaching enemy fleet long before it became visible to the naked eye, as is made clear in another story Mas'udi tells. In the reign of al-Walid, the king of Byzantium thought up a way to decommission this dangerous proto-radar. He sent a slave who pretended to al-Walid that the treasures of Shaddad son of 'Ad were buried underneath the Pharos, and that Alexander had set up the mirror to protect them. Al-Walid, as was to be expected, sent a troop of soldiers to demolish the Pharos, 'and since that day the Pharos has remained in a ruinous state, up to the present year 332/943'. Perhaps a century later, Abu Taher Tarsusi told a similar story in his *Darab-nameh* about a tower built by Plato 'in the Maghreb': it was 'better than Ptolemy's', and had a mirror that could see all the way to Rum (Constantinople): it too was destroyed by 'the Muslims' for treasure.⁶

Both these stories show Alexander as a clever inventor of defensive stratagems. The mirror reflects distant events and thus gives him both knowledge and control of the world at large.⁷ The replica monsters use the mirror image in a different way, to scare the real monsters into believing they have met their match, like dogs who bark at their reflections in a mirror.

Both motifs are brought together in the poem of the thirteenth century Persian poet, Amir Khusrau of Delhi, entitled *The Mirror of Alexander*.⁸ Here the diving bell itself is the mirror: it gives Alexander knowledge of all the creatures of the deep⁹ and thus enables him to control them. As Amir Khusrau's translator Angelo Piemontese describes it, 'Among other things, there appear to him the antediluvian continent, Atlantis, drowned along with its superstitious inhabitants, which have evolved into aquatic men, as well as creatures that originate in the sea. The glass wall of the submersible, a kind of mirror, functions as a surface which reflects such things, a screen on which they are projected.' In Amir Khusrau's version, Alexander is accompanied in the diving bell by an angel who explains what he sees.

5 F. DOUFIKAR-AERTS, "Alexander the Great and the Pharos of Alexandria in Arabic Literature" in: M. Bridges and J. C. Bürgel (eds.), *The Problematics of Power: Eastern and Western Representations of Alexander the Great*, Bern 1996, 191-202.

6 See M. GAILLARD, *Alexandre le Grand en Iran: le Darab-nameh d'Abu Taher Tarsusi*, Paris 2005, 375-8.

7 Cf. HAFEZ, *The Collected Lyrics of Háfiz of Shiráz*, ed. and tr. P. Avery, Cambridge 2007, no. 5 (p. 25): "A bowl of wine is the mirror of Alexander: Look, so that it might display to you the state of Dara's kingdom". Conversely, the mirror represents the wine bowl in no. 45 (p. 197). See also A.-M. SCHIMMEL, *A Two-Coloured Brocade: The Imagery of Persian Poetry*, Chapel Hill/London 1992, 115 and notes.

8 Translated by A.M. PIEMONTESE, *Lo Specchio Alessandrino*, Catanzaro 1999; see also A.M. PIEMONTESE, "Sources and Art of Amir Khosrou's "The Alexandrine Mirror"", in: F. Lewis and S. Sharma (eds.) *The Necklace of the Pleiades: Studies in Persian Literature Presented to Heshmat Moayyad on his 80th Birthday*, Amsterdam 2007, 31-45.

9 Cf. GAILLARD, *Alexandre* (n. 6), 261-2: Alexander travels the sea to see all the world's marvels.

The creatures directed their attention to the floating glass object. They manifested in their own way their attention to their guardian, nay their lord, who had embarked in the transparent Mirror of Alexander.

“Who are these creatures who live so secretly? What are these gestures they make with their hands and feet, and why do they make them?” asked Alexander in puzzlement. His interlocutor explained ‘These are kinds of aquatic humans. They are to be found hidden and far away from the motions of the celestial wheel. They are drawn to you by my attractive force. In their language they ask “O faithless and ungrateful mortal, who do not recognise the grace of God! You have seen all the world from top to bottom, and you are still not satiated with this vain journeying.”’¹⁰

So the moral drawn by the author is the common one of Alexander's insatiability, but the method by which it is presented is rather unusual. To a Persian reader the mirror of Alexander which reflects the whole world must inevitably recall the Cup of Jamshid, into which when one looks one can perceive everything that is going on anywhere in the world.¹¹ Tarsusi actually calls it the Glass of Jamshid.¹² The two objects become one and the same in Hafez' line, ‘see in the mirror of the cup the artistic skill of the Invisible’.¹³ The idea goes back to Greek antiquity, since Aristophanes has a joke about seeing the future in a mirror at *Acharnians* 1128-9, and seers are often depicted carrying a mirror.

The motif then reappears in Jami's *Salaman and Absal*, in which the Shah ‘who ruled the realm of Yun, And wore the ring of Empire of Sikander’, had a mirror made in his tower –

A mirror, like the bosom of the wise,
Reflecting all the world, and lifting up
The veil from its secret, good and evil.

(The translation is Edward Fitzgerald's). In this he is able to spy his son and his nurse and lover Absal, even though they have fled far away.

The motif was borrowed by H. Rider Haggard in his novel *She*, where the thousands-of-years-old heroine Ayesha displays to her wondering English visitors a bowl of water which shows them what their families are up to at home at that moment. For both Ayesha and Jamshid, knowledge is power: to see what is on your imaging screen is to control it. Yet

10 Amir Khusrau: PIEMONTESE, *Lo Specchio* (n. 8), 166. In Tarsusi (386f) Alexander descends in his diving bell with Anqitun; an angel reproves him for his insatiable curiosity. The vessel then rots away in the acid waters of the sea, and the hero has to be rescued by a fish.

11 Cf. HAFEZ, *Collected* (n. 7), no. 267 (p. 336, n. 4); SALAMI, *Divan* (n. 1) 149. For an illustration see Persis M. BERLEKAMP, *Wonder, Image and Cosmos in Medieval Islam*, New Haven/London 2011, 94-95.

12 BERLEKAMP, *Wonder* (n. 11), 12 and n. 18. The Cup of Jamshid is not in Ferdowsi, but becomes a topic from the twelfth century, under the influence of Kai Khusrau's inexhaustible magic cup (Tarsusi 177). See *Encyclopaedia Iranica* s.v. Jamshid's cup. Jamshid also sometimes has a ring, like Solomon, while in Attar it becomes a divine tablet in which everything is written. See also SCHIMMEL, *Two-Coloured* (n. 7), citing Bedil Kulliyāt I. 195, ‘What we have seen: the ring of the scar of love, Alexander did not see in his mirror, nor Jamshid in his goblet’. See also Manushehr MORTAZOU'I, *Mektub – e- Hafez*, Tehran 1384, 214-16: section ‘Jam-e-jam o aine-ye-Eskandar’.

13 HAFEZ, *Collected* (n. 7), no. 468 (p. 566).

such wizardry is commonly morally suspect, as is indicated both by Apuleius' self defence for having a mirror in his house (*Apol.* 13–16) and by the case of the evil magician Klingsor in the Parzival legend, who sees what is going on in the world by means of his magic mirror,¹⁴ or of the curse laid on the Lady of Shalott, always to perceive the world in a mirror – until one day she catches sight of Lancelot riding by: she falls in love, turns to look at him directly, the mirror shatters and she dies. (A perfect Sufi allegory: see below).

A mirror is always a wonder, as well as a way of observing. This is because of the difficulty in the ancient world of producing a truly reflective surface: when the best that is usually available is a pool of still water or a surface of polished bronze or iron, anything resembling a modern glass mirror is truly amazing.¹⁵ It can be a source of confusion, as is evident from the Qur'anic story of Solomon (27. 43–44): when he invited the Queen of Sheba for a visit, he made her walk across a floor polished to a mirror-like glassiness. Mistaking this for a pool of water, she hitched up her skirts, and thus Solomon was able to see that she had hairy legs (or goat's feet) and took due precautions. Her deception symbolises her submission to illusion and thus to idolatry.¹⁶

The world is full of wonders, and a Book of Wonders can be referred to as a world-seeing glass, as in the case of Tusi's book of 1388:¹⁷ its titles include *The Wonders of Creation* as well as *The World-seeing Glass (Jām-i-giti Nama)*. It is not irrelevant that the English word 'mirror' is derived from Latin *mirare*.

14 Klingsor's mirror, which appears at the beginning of Act II of Wagner's *Parsifal*, was invented by Wolfram von Eschenbach (where he is called Clinschor) on the basis of the reflecting pillar placed atop the tomb of Camilla in Heinrich von Veldeke's *Eneasroman*: it was even made by the same architect, Geometras. Wolfram writes 'It seemed to Gawan that in the great pillar all countries were made known to him, and that the lands were going round and round, and that the great mountains were on the receiving end of one another's joust. In the pillar he found people riding and walking, some running, some standing.' Veldeke's pillar in turn seems to be based on a memory of a circular metal pillar reported by travellers to India in the city of Ajmer, and now to be seen outside the Qutb-minar mosque in Delhi: this was supposed to have such a high polish that it reflected everything around it.

15 Sheet glass was being made no earlier than the Roman period: R. STONEMAN and T. GARGIULO, *Romanzo di Alessandro*, II, Milan 2012, 18 for bibliography. Philo *Leg. ad Gaium* 45.364 seems to refer to window glass. Pliny (*Nat.* XXXVI 66, 193) states that glass mirrors were invented in Sidon, but the backing will have been of polished metal; the modern silvering process was invented in the nineteenth century. See also W. MCCARTY, "The Shape of the Mirror: metaphorical catoptrics in classical literature", *Arethusa* 22 (1989), n. 10.

16 Narcissus symbolises the same thing: he is enslaved by illusion, which is the world of death. Cf. H. BELTING, *Florence and Baghdad: Renaissance Art and Arab Science*, Cambridge/London 2011, 230–231. In Milton's *Paradise Lost* IV 449–491 Eve, newly created and wondering who she is, catches sight of her reflection in a pool; but a voice warns her not to be seduced by it. So when she sees Adam, she takes him for another reflection and turns away, until she realises that he is her true 'other self': 'A voice thus warned me, What thou seest,/ What there thou seest fair creature is thyself,/ With thee it came and goes: but follow me,/ And I will bring thee where no shadow stays/ Thy coming, and thy soft embraces, he/ Whose image thou art, him thou shalt enjoy/ Inseparably thine'. Dionysus too has to be entrapped by a mirror before the Titans tear him apart. He is, in Neoplatonic terms, the descended soul ensnared by the world of seeming, and must be destroyed to be regenerated. See K. RAINE, *Blake and Antiquity*, London 1979, 56. Mermaids too lure sailors to their deaths by means of mirrors.

17 BERLEKAMP, *Wonder* (n. 11), 6, 91–102. Barry Unsworth also plays with this medieval fascination with mirrors in his novel *The Ruby in her Navel*, London 2006, 169–70.

Inventing such a clever device is of a piece with the image of Alexander in legend from the Greek *Alexander Romance* onwards. In the earliest versions his clever tricks are simple ones like tying torches to the tails of sheep to give the impression of a great army moving at night-time, or disguising himself as one of his officers;¹⁸ but by the eighth century L recension the stories of the diving bell and the flying machine have become firmly embedded in the Greek tale. But the fullest development of the idea of Alexander as an inventor comes in Arabic and Persian tradition, in part at least because of his association with Aristotle,¹⁹ whose works were a primary focus of the ninth century translation school in Baghdad.²⁰ Arab writers often associate him more with works of science and pseudo-science, such as his contribution to the pseudo-Aristotelian book *On Stones* or his composition of works of astrology,²¹ and in Persian traditions this is accentuated by his penchant for keeping company with philosophers. His inventions are not just useful, they are of a kind that prompt reflection, as in the passage of Amir Khusrau just quoted.

An astrolabe from Iran, made in 1650–1651,²² bears the inscription ‘I inquired the date from a man with a sharp intellect; he said, ‘It is the mirror of Alexander and the cup that shows the universe.’ Understanding the movement of the heavenly bodies is comparable with knowing the hidden doings of the distant world. In Tarsusi (236) the astrolabe is able to see into the future as well as into the past. Alexander is frequently associated with astronomy and astrology, and it is notable that a number of scenes from his adventures as told in the *Shahnameh* feature as pages of the *Falnamas*. Most of his appearances, however, are given an inauspicious interpretation: whether he is enclosing Gog and Magog, searching for the Water of Life with Khidr, or in a rather similar composition (perhaps) coming upon the Seven Sleepers of Ephesus, all his appearances are interpreted as an augury of disappointment and disaster. This is far from the model of control suggested by the story of the invention of the mirror.

One more mirror story shows Alexander as a redoubtable inventor of instruments of control, and that is the account of his use of burning mirrors as a weapon of war. In this case, however, the successful weapon is constructed by Alexander's companions. In the eleventh century author Tarsusi (264–265) it is Plato who constructs a mirror to attack the city of Nowt,²³ while the city of Keydarau (Tarsusi 168) is protected by burning mirrors mounted on the walls. In the later Arabic *Sirat al-Iskandar*²⁴ the engineers are al-Khidr and Balinas (Apollonius of Tyana, though Piemontese thinks he should be the engineer Eupalinus) and an unnamed pupil of Aristotle. This huge square mirror, made of 200 separate

18 In FARID UD-DIN ATTAR, *The Conference of the Birds*, tr. A. Darbandi and D. Davis, Harmondsworth/New York 1984, 54, Alexander's disguise becomes part of an allegory of dull nature's inability to recognise majesty.

19 B. BREND, *Perspectives on Persian Painting*, London 2003, 20.

20 See in general, D. GUTAS, *Greek Thought, Arabic Culture*, London 1998; J. LYONS, *The House of Wisdom*, London 2009.

21 R. STONEMAN, *Alexander the Great: A Life in Legend*, London 2008, 121–122; Tarsusi (see GAILLARD, *Alexandre* (n. 6)), 114.

22 M. FARHAD and S. BAĞCI (eds.), *Falnama: The Book of Omens*, London 2009, 181.

23 See also BERLEKAMP, *Wonder* (n. 11), n. 18.

24 F. DOUFIKAR-AERTS, *Alexander Magnus Arabicus: A Survey of the Alexander Tradition Through Seven Centuries from Pseudo-Callisthenes to Šūrī*, Paris/Louvain/Walpole (MA) 2010, 220 and 332.

pieces, is placed on a mountain opposite the city of Jabarsa. When the sun rises, a conical beam of light is reflected from the mirror and sets fire to the city. (In abu Hamid al-Andalusī al-Gaunati (1118) this is the mirror in Alexandria, ‘made of Chinese iron’, which not only reflects approaching enemy ships but sets fire to them as well).²⁵

The invention of the burning mirror is commonly said, of course, to be the work of Archimedes, who is supposed to have destroyed the Roman ships besieging Syracuse by setting fire to their sails; scholarly and scientific opinion seems to be that this is impossible,²⁶ but the fascination of the idea may be connected with the Arabs’ fear of the Byzantine invention, Greek fire. Possible or not, Alexander acquired a reputation for this stratagem which surfaces also in Western medieval texts. The *Gesta Romanorum* tells how Alexander’s soldiers were being killed during a siege without any visible wound.²⁷ His philosophers explain to him that on the walls of the city there is a basilisk, a serpent whose gaze infects whatever it looks on with plague. The solution, they tell him, is to ‘place a mirror in an elevated situation between the army and the wall where the basilisk is; and no sooner shall he behold it, than his own look, reflected in the mirror, will return upon himself, and kill him.’²⁸ The technique resembles that by which Alexander kills the dragon in the *Shah-nameh*, forcing it to swallow a cow stuffed with pitch and naphtha, which sets its insides on fire with its own breath.

2 The Competition of the Greek and Chinese Painters

It is time to turn to a more complex occurrence of mirrors in the Persian legends of Alexander. This is the story best known from Nizami’s *Iskandarnama*, of the competition between the Greek and the Chinese painter²⁹ – though it is also in Tarsusi and Amir Khusrau.³⁰ (Its origin lies in al-Ghazali’s (1058–1111) Revitalization of the Religious Sciences, *Ihyā ulum al-Din*).³¹ In this well-known story, the two painters are challenged to produce paintings of the same scene. Separated by a curtain, they work away at their pictures. When the curtain is removed and their works are revealed, face to face on opposite sides of the chamber, they

25 DOUFIKAR-AERTS, “Alexander” (n. 5), 195.

26 D.L. SIMMS, “Archimedes and the burning mirrors of Syracuse”, *Technology and Culture* 18 (1977), 1–24. But an experiment carried out at the Greek naval base of Skaramangas in 1975 apparently succeeded in doing just this: J. FREELY, *The Flame of Miletus: The Birth of Science in Ancient Greece (and how it Changed the World)*, London/New York 2012, 96, without documentation; and in summer 2013 reflections from a convex glass skyscraper in London melted parked cars.

27 *Gesta Romanorum*, tr. C. Swan and W. Hooper, New York/ Dover 1876/1959, 244–245. The sannuja in Arabic lore is a similar creature that kills with its eye-beams: for an illustration see BERLEKAMP, *Wonder* (n. 11), 110.

28 The author draws a very Senecan moral: ‘My beloved, look into the glass of reflection, and, by remembrance of human frailty, destroy the vices which time elicits’.

29 NIZAMI, *Das Alexanderbuch*, tr. J.C. Bürgel, Zurich 1991, 288–291. A fundamental discussion is P.P. SOUCEK, “Nizami on Painters and Painting”, in: R. Ettinghausen (ed.), *Islamic Art in the Metropolitan Museum of Art*, New York 1972, 9–21. See also BÜRGEL, *Feather* (n. 2), 138–141; M. BARRY, *Figurative Art in Medieval Islam and the Riddle of Bihzad of Herat (1465–1535)*, Paris 2004.

30 J.C. BÜRGEL, “On some sources of Nizami’s *Iskandarnama*”, in: F. Lewis and S. Sharma (eds.), *The Necklace of the Pleiades: Studies in Persian Literature Presented to Heshmat Moayyad on his 80th Birthday*, Amsterdam 2007, 21–30.

31 See SCHIMMEL, *Two-Coloured* (n. 7), 149–150. The best known illustration is Chester Beatty Library MS Pers. 142, fol. 1242; also Metropolitan Museum, New York, 13.228.3, f. 322a.

turn out to be identical in every respect. The king is unable to judge which of the two painters is the more expert portraitist of reality, until the sage Balinas interposes a veil between the two paintings: now one of them is immediately darkened while the other continues to glow with colour: "the delineations of the Rumi departed not from lustre and colour, while obscurity fell upon the polished surface of the Chini".³² The Chinese painter has simply placed a mirror opposite the Greek painter's work! The mirror is a deception, and in Platonic terms it is at a yet further remove from reality from the painting: the real world, for Plato, is a copy of the Forms, a painting is a copy of the real world and a mirror is only a copy of that, therefore three removes from reality.³³ Yet the matter is not so simple. Al-Ghazali makes clear that 'the Greek painters are the exact counterpart of the Greek philosophers, great minds capable of apprehending the Divine mysteries technically... the

"Chinese painters, on the other hand, correspond to the intuitive mystics... capable of apprehending the same cosmic order at once, through divine inspiration... because they can contemplate the identical Divine mysteries upon the polished mirror of their purified hearts".³⁴

The Greek and Chinese painters are of equal rank. The Chinese is not playing a trick. The Sufi "polishes his heart until the Radiance of God shines in it".³⁵

The tale of the painters is also told by Rumi,³⁶ but in his version the roles of the Greek and the Chinese are reversed (and the presiding Iskandar becomes an anonymous 'Sultan'):

"The Greeks stand for the Sufis clearly:
Without techniques from books of theory,
They've cleansed their breasts so well that they shine bright
Free from all stinginess, desire, and spite.
The heart's a mirror with such purity
It can reflect forms from eternity".

At one level, art history is full of stories about works of art that are deceptively like life. The religious leader Mani, who fell foul of the Sassanid kings, acquired fame as a painter, and once produced a picture of the rotting carcass of a dead dog which was so lifelike, if

32 Tr. H.W. Clarke, cited in STONEMAN, *Alexander* (n. 21), 36. For another translation, see BARRY, *Figurative* (n. 29), 182.

33 So also Ibn Sina, cited in BERLEKAMP, *Wonder* (n. 11), 102: "the eye errs, for it does not distinguish between the condition of the mirrored image, and the cloud behind it". The problem of the reversal of the mirror image is ignored in this story. "Nature herself is only nearly symmetrical, so that we will not be jealous of God's perfection" (M. GARDNER, *The Ambidextrous Universe*, London 1967, 235. To this extent a mirror is not a creator, because a reflection is the reverse of the real world. Klingsor's crime is to take reflection for reality, whereas the way to enlightenment is to go through the mirror to the reality it prefigures.

34 BARRY, *Figurative* (n. 29), 128. See also M.A. SELLS, *Mystical Languages of Unsayings*, Chicago/London 1994, 84: the divine attributes become actuality in the polished mirror. Also SCHIMMEL, *Two-Coloured* (n. 7), 293.

35 SOUCEK, "Nizami" (n. 29), 14. Cf. the story of Avicenna and the dervish, cited by BARRY, *Figurative* (n. 29), 181: "what I know, he sees"; "what I see, he knows".

36 Jalāl AL-DIN RŪMĪ, *Masnavi*, Book One, tr. J. Mojaddedi, Oxford 2004, 212–214. The citation is of couplets 3497–3499.

that is the right word, that people avoided it in disgust. Yet it must be acknowledged as a masterpiece of artistry. (The story immediately follows the story about the painters in Nizami). With this painting he defaced the mirror-stone that was placed before a Chinese city to trick people into taking it for a pool of water; so Mani's addition drew attention to the illusory nature of our perceptions: this world, in dualist terms, is a Lie. Then there is the story of the bunch of grapes painted by Zeuxis, which was so realistic that the birds came and pecked at it; or that of the Japanese painter Zhang who painted a bird so lifelike that it flew off the page and disappeared into the sky.³⁷ The painter Shapur in Nizami's story of Khusrau and Shirin says "The person whose head I draw moves, the bird whose wing I make flies".³⁸ In these stories, the painter has become a creator in his own right, like Jesus in the apocryphal tale of the Gospel of Thomas, who moulded sparrows out of clay and then breathed life into them.³⁹ Only a God should have the power to create life. The danger is that people may mistake the creations of a painter for living creatures, a kind of forgery.⁴⁰ The Renaissance thinker Alberti was aware of this power of art: "what is painting but the art of embracing by means of art the surface of the pool?" – i.e. making the reflected Narcissus come to life.⁴¹ Umberto Eco says "Men draw to achieve without mirrors, what mirrors allow them to achieve".⁴²

That is why, in Orhan Pamuk's novel, *My Name is Red*, the painter Master Osman blinds himself in order to create his paintings directly from remembered reality, the world of the Forms; the European manner of painting from the life is an anathema to Islamic belief.⁴³ The blind painter knows how each scene should look and can recognise them from a child's description. This is what Sadiqi Beg says of Bihzad:⁴⁴ "If one sought for the form of an idol, he wrought the very source of its form". The theory is explained by another writer named Nizami, Nizami-yi-'Arudi of Samarkand,⁴⁵ on the basis that the painter draws on the images preserved in the posterior portion of the anterior ventricle of the brain: "this faculty (the *khiyal*) is thus as it were their treasury, so that if the sensible thing itself disappears, this figure and this form will not cease to subsist in it". These images and forms are consolidated on the mirror of the intellect by the eye of the imagination.⁴⁶

37 T. SCREECH, *Obtaining Images: Art, Production and Display in Edo Japan*, London 2012, 31. Similar stories tell of Wu's dragons and Sesshu's mice.

38 SOUCEK, "Nizami" (n. 29), 17.

39 Also in Qur'an 5.113: BARRY, *Figurative* (n. 29), 7.

40 BELTING, *Florence* (n. 16), 64–65.

41 *On Painting*, II, p. 26 Penguin; quoted in D. LOMAS, *Narcissus Reflected: The Myth in Surrealist and Contemporary Art*, Edinburgh 2011, 19. In Persian painting the people rarely look directly at the viewer, as this would make them too lifelike, like mirror images. A picture must be part of a narrative. BELTING, *Florence* (n. 16), 83.

42 U. ECO, "Mirrors", in: P. Bouissac, M. Herzfeld and R. Posner (eds.), *Iconicity: Essays on the Nature of Culture: Festschrift for Thomas A. Sebeok on his 65th Birthday*, Tübingen 1986, 223.

43 A more generous view of art sees it as a process of abstraction from the specific, which thus comes closer to the Form: this Aristotelian view is that of Ibn Sina, see BERLEKAMP, *Wonder* (n. 11), 46 and 114: "these paintings cannot actually make the Platonic Forms themselves visible, but they can visually open a path toward intellectual reception of the Forms". But it does not make mirrors any more acceptable! – 102.

44 BARRY, *Figurative* (n. 29), 187. A saint mirrors in his mind the archetypes of earthly forms.

45 SOUCEK, "Nizami" (n. 29), 11–12.

46 Dust Muhammad, *Treatise* 21, lines 4–5, cited by SOUCEK, "Nizami" (n. 29).

That is why Nizami liked to describe himself as a Mirror of the Invisible World:⁴⁷ his account of Alexander's life (among other things) is a reflection of a divine unchanging truth, not of the ephemera of the visible world. The world is in fact God's mirror, a projection of the active intellect, sometimes perceived as an angel.

The world is God's mirror, but God himself may not be seen in his own essence. Yet he may still be perceived through the mirror of this world, since all visible things are reflecting fragments of His epiphany or theophany, or as expressed in Islamic languages, of His *tajalli* (mirrored image). Nizami's younger contemporary Dante, in Canto xxix of the *Paradiso*, sang how God reflected his multiplied image through out the entire universe in the numberless mirrors of his countless angels, although he himself remained the abiding One:

“Vedi l’eccelso omai e la larghezza
Dell’eterno valor, poscia che tanti
Speculi fatti s’ha in che si spezza,
Uno manendo in sè come davanti”.⁴⁸

A mirror, like a painting, is an ambiguous object. It is a deception⁴⁹ but in mystical thought it is commonly a revelation. The painting that Candace has made of Alexander in the *Alexander Romance* has a purpose which in its context is almost magical: it cuts through Alexander's deception and reveals him for who he is. In the Syriac version and later, painters who accompany the Persian ambassadors to Philip's court make a portrait of Alexander, with which the princess Roxane then falls in love, just as Shirin falls in love with a portrait of Khusraw in Nizami's *Khosrow and Shirin*: paintings of this scene are on occasion interchanged in MSS with that of Candace and the portrait of Alexander.

3 Plato, Neoplatonists and Sufi Mystics on Mirrors

The Platonic idea has its roots in ancient theories of vision, in which the eye itself acts as a kind of mirror. Seneca *Nat.* I 5.1 sums up the two competing views:

“de speculis duae opinioniones sunt: alii enim in illis simulacra cerni putant, id est corporum nostrorum figuras a nostris corporibus emissas ac separatas; alii non aiunt imagines in speculo sed ipsa aspici corpora retorta oculorum acie at in se rursus reflexa.”

“There are two opinions about mirrors: some think that simulacra are seen in them, that is models of our bodies sent out and separated from our bodies; others say they

47 In the preface to *Layla and Majnun*. See BÜRCEL, *Feather* (n. 2), 139.

48 BARRY, *Figurative* (n. 29), 308; cf. 255–256. Mark Musa translates the Dante citation: “And now you see the height, you see the breadth / of eternal goodness that divides itself / into these countless mirrors that reflect / Itself, remaining one, as it was always.” God can even *be* the mirror, as in Meister Eckhart. The mirror itself is always invisible: it reflects everything and is never reflected by anything else. T. BURCKHARDT, *Mirror of the Intellect: Essays on Traditional Science and Sacred Art*, Cambridge 1987, 122 cites Dante, *Paradiso* 26. 106 ff: “I see it in that Mirror of the Truth / itself perfect reflector of all things, yet no thing can reflect It perfectly”. Non-being is a mirror for being: BÜRCEL, *Feather* (n.29), 138.

49 Even a trap, as it is for Dionysus, and perhaps for Alice when she goes through the looking glass.

are not images in the mirror but that our bodies themselves are seen by the bending back of the eye beam, and are reflected again to themselves.”

The atomists’ belief was that continual streams of atoms left the surfaces of bodies (e.g. your face when you look in a mirror) and, when they reached a mirror, were stopped (Lucr. IV 103–108) or turned back to the observing body; Plato and the Stoics believed, rather, that the eye sends out beams which return and see the body itself. ‘In one case one sees only images in a mirror, in the other case one sees the objects themselves. But in both cases what is valid for the mirror is also valid for the eye.’⁵⁰ The traditional philosophical view is that our senses are a kind of mirror,⁵¹ and all we ever perceive are reflections, not what Immanuel Kant called the ‘Ding an Sich’: we only know what comes to us through our senses, and such perceptions are no better than mirror images.⁵²

Hans Belting argues on the basis of Frontisi-Ducroux’ discussion, “The Greeks could never decide whether what they saw in a mirror was reality or only a deception”. Umberto Eco puts it rather differently: “The catoptric universe is a reality which can give the impression of virtuality, while the semiotic universe [i.e. one created through signs, such as art] is a virtuality which can give the impression of reality”.⁵³ The mirror is thus a route to reality after all. But Plato was clear that the eye was a mirror, and gazing into the beloved’s eye would enable one to see oneself better. (Seneca’s view was slightly different, that looking in a mirror was a way to self-knowledge: if you looked at your reflection when you were angry, you would avoid making a face like that again and thus learn to control anger).⁵⁴ The Platonic idea of the Beloved as the Mirror of the Soul has a long subsequent history in Neo-Platonism and Sufi doctrines:⁵⁵ it is through love that one comes to perceive the higher reality that is concealed within one’s own soul, and is thus enabled to take the first steps away from earthly love to the love of what is heavenly. “Now we see through a glass darkly; but then, face to face”, in the words of St. Paul (1 *Ep.Cor.* 13). This is what lies behind Shakespeare’s lines:⁵⁶

“Nor doth the eye itself,
That most pure spirit of sense, behold itself,
Not going from itself, but eye to eye opposed,
Salutes each other with each other’s form,
For speculation turns not to itself
Till it hath travelled and is mirrored there
Where it may see itself”.

50 F. FRONTISI-DUCROUX, *Dans l’oeil du miroir*, Paris 1997, 145; BELTING, *Florence* (n. 16), 100.

51 R. RORTY, *Philosophy and the Mirror of Nature*, Oxford 1980, 12: “the picture which holds traditional philosophy captive is that of the mind as a great mirror”. Cf. 297–298, criticising Putnam, for whom picturing is unproblematic, with the proposal that what our minds actually have is “working diagrams”.

52 KANT, *Prolegomena*: see GARDNER, *Ambidextrous* (n.33), 160–165.

53 ECO, “Mirrors” (n. 42), 215–237.

54 S. BARTSCH, *The Mirror of the Self: Sexuality, Self-knowledge, and the Gaze in the Early Roman Empire*, Chicago/Bristol 2006.

55 FRONTISI-DUCROUX, *Dans l’oeil* (n. 50); MCCARTY, “Shape” (n. 15).

56 *Troilus and Cressida* 3.3.105–111.

In Plato's *Phaedrus* it is through looking into the eye of the Beloved that one can perceive Love: "his lover is as it were a mirror in which he beholds himself" (255d), and "he who is not a lover can offer a mere acquaintance flavoured with worldly wisdom" (256 e, cf. 256 ab). The idea is developed at length in *Alcibiades* 133ac,⁵⁷ a text particularly popular with Neoplatonists, who were unaware of its doubtful authenticity.⁵⁸ (I omit Alcibiades' repeated agreements with Socrates).

If the eye is to see itself, it must look at the eye, and at that part of the eye where sight which is the virtue of the eye resides? And if the soul, my dear Alcibiades, is ever to know herself, must she not look at the soul; and especially at that part of the soul in which her virtue resides, and to nay other which is like this? And do we know of any part of our souls more divine than that which has to do with wisdom and knowledge? Then this is that part of the soul which resembles the divine; and he who looks at this and at the whole class of things divine, will be most likely to know himself? <So, just as mirrors are clearer than the reflection in the eye, and purer and brighter, just so God will be purer and brighter than the best that is in our soul? So looking at God we should be using the best mirror of mortal things for the virtue of the soul, and thus we should best see and know ourselves>.⁵⁹

Thereafter it becomes a regular theme of Sufi mysticism. "Eventually it is best to find a person, the person who will be your mirror. Remember, only in another person's heart can you truly see yourself and the presence of God within you".⁶⁰ (Many such Neoplatonic ideas were mediated to Arab and Persian thinkers through the "Theology of Aristotle", actually a version of portions of the *Enneads* of Plotinus).⁶¹ Hafez expresses this in his poem:

"When, into the mirror of the cup, the reflection of thy face fell, From the wine's laughter, into the crude desire of the cup, the mystic fell."⁶²

Shirin exemplifies this, for when she sees a portrait of Khusrau 'in that mirror she saw her own reflection; when she seized it, she fainted'.⁶³

One way of presenting this idea in Persian poetry is through the image of the parrot: in order to teach a parrot to speak, one places a mirror in front of it while speaking the words one wishes it to learn.⁶⁴ So it thinks it is saying them itself.

A parrot sees its reflection facing it in the mirror.

57 Cf. *Phdr.* 255d (p. 501).

58 M. EDWARDS, *Culture and Philosophy in the Age of Plotinus*, London 2006, 39, 54. N. Denyer's Cambridge edition (2001) contains a vigorous defence of the authenticity of *Alcibiades*.

59 The first part is Jowett's translation. The bracketed section (my translation) is not in all the MSS: see Burnet's apparatus criticus.

60 E. SHAFARAK, *The Forty Rules of Love*, London 2010, 72.

61 P. ADAMSON, *The Arabic Plotinus: A Philosophical Study of the Theology of Aristotle*, London 2002.

62 HAFEZ ed. Salami, *Divan* (n. 1), 120.

63 Compare Eve taking Adam for her own reflection in Milton, cited in n. 16. See further L. LEWISOHN, *Beyond Faith and Infidelity: The Sufi Poetry and Teachings of Mahmud Shabistari*, Richmond 1995, 150, citing Rumi.

64 The idea goes back to Photius' argument against Diodorus of Tarsus (d. 394), *Against Predestination*, ap. Phot. *Bibl.* 223.216a. See also SCHIMMEL, *Two-Coloured* (n. 7), 182–183: the parrot can become a nightingale by looking in a mirror.

The teacher is concealed behind the mirror: that sweet-tongued well-instructed man is talking.

The little parrot thinks that these words uttered in low tones are spoken by the parrot in the mirror.

Therefore it learns human speech from one of its own kind".⁶⁵

In the same way the soul 'practises' enlightenment through the reflection in a mirror.⁶⁶

One of the most speaking examples of the symbol of the beloved as a step to love of God is the story in Farid ud-Din Attar's *Conference of the Birds* about the sheikh who falls in love with a Rumi (Greek) princess:

"I spurned idolatry
When sober, but your beauty is to me
An idol for whose sake I'll gladly burn
My faith's Koran".⁶⁷

The shocking apostasy induced by love of a mortal object is a step on the road to revelation, not just for the sheikh, but for the girl; for presently the sheikh humbles himself in repentance, returns to his dervish ways and grows into a purer love of Allah. In due course, the girl is converted to Islam – a happy conclusion though it also leads to her death, just as love did for the Lady of Shalott:

"She was a drop returned to truth's great sea;
She left this world, and so, like wind, must we".⁶⁸

"In fact this Byzantine princess's countenance was actually the mirror of the divine, the reflection of all the celestial archetypes that exist in the mind of God".⁶⁹

Much of Attar's poem revolves around the image of the mirror. The Simurgh, who is leading the birds on the path of love and enlightenment, 'makes a mirror in our hearts' (53), he is their mirror (219, cf. 140) and the heart is seen as the mirror of the friend (54). At one point, the Simurgh's shadow and himself are one (29).

In Rumi, too, the soul must become a mirror in order to receive enlightenment:

"Dismiss cares and be utterly clear of heart,
Like the face of a mirror without image and picture.
When it becomes clear of images, all images are contained in it;
No man's face is ashamed of that clear-faced one.
Wouldst thou have a clear mirror, behold thyself therein,
For it is not ashamed or afraid of telling the truth.
Since the steel face gained this purity by discrimination,
What needs the heart's face, which has no dust?"⁷⁰

65 Jalāl AL-DĪN RŪMĪ, *The Mathnawī of Jalālu'ddīn Rūmī*, Book V, ed. and tr. R.A. Nicholson, London/Leiden 1934, VI, 87.

66 HAFEZ ed. Salami, *Divan* (n.1) 381 = HAFEZ, *Collected* (n. 7), no 373 (p. 456), cf. no. 242.

67 ATTAR, *Conference* (n. 18), 66.

68 ATTAR, *Conference* (n. 18), 75.

69 BARRY, *Figurative* (n. 29), 127.

4 Alexander's Mirror: through a glass darkly

This image brings us back at last to Alexander. In this passage of Rumi it is the mirror which tells the truth, while the body is the dust which obscures it. The image recalls the parable of the eye or Wonderstone that is associated with Alexander. At the Gate of Paradise, Alexander was presented with a mysterious stone, which when laid in a pair of scales could not be outweighed by any amount of gold; but once it was sprinkled with a little dust, even a feather could outweigh it.⁷¹ The parable is explicated when the stone is identified with the human eye, which 'grazes on the multiplicity of novelties' and is never satiated, but once it is covered in dust it is unmoved by any external stimulus. For Rumi, the enclosure of the soul in the body is like a kind of death, while the mirror is what enables the soul to have vision.⁷²

Another version of the wonderstone story appears in Ferdowsi's *Shahnameh* (479–480) and in modified form in Mirkhond's *History of the Early Kings of Persia*, where Alexander and the Hindu sage (in Ferdowsi (480) it is the Kayd) exchange symbolic gifts: Alexander sends a metal ball to the philosopher, who has it made into a mirror:

"the king, on beholding the polished mirror, called for a basin of water; in which having immersed the mirror, he commanded the basin and water, at the bottom of which was the mirror, to be shown to the illustrious sage: the philosopher, on this, formed the mirror into a cup, which he placed on the top, so as to float about the basin, and sent both the basin and the cup to Iskander. The king then ordered the cup to be filled with earth, and once more taken back to the philosopher; as soon as the cup filled with earth met his eyes, he began to weep and mourn aloud, and to reproach grievously his own sinful passions".

This puzzling behaviour is explained by the interpretation of the cup of earth, that "every being of accident is necessarily doomed to dissolution."⁷³

The story is so similar to a Buddhist parable that I wonder if there is not some connection:

"Just as it is in the nature of a mirror to shine, so all beings at their origin possess spiritual illumination. When, however, passions obscure the mirror, it becomes covered over, as if with dust. When false thoughts, under the direction of the master, are overcome and destroyed, they cease to proclaim themselves. Then is the Intellect il-

70 No. 13 in Jalāl AL-DĪN RŪMĪ, *Selected Poems from the Divan-i-Shams-i-Tabrizi: Along with the Original Persian*, tr. R.A. Nicholson, Bethesda 2001, 53. Compare RŪMĪ, *Masnavi* (n. 36), I 3166 ff, where the Sufi is a mirror for the king: "Sufis are seated straight in front – their role is serving as the mirror of the soul". See also Hafez LX in HAFEZ, *Collected* (n. 7), 97.

71 "Alexander the Great's Journey to Paradise" translated in R. STONEMAN, *Legends of Alexander the Great*, London 2011², 67–75. See also STONEMAN, *Alexander* (n. 21), 164–169. The episode also occurs in the Arabic Romances.

72 The journey through love to Love as outlined by Rumi is the subject of two recent novels concerning the life of Rumi, *The Forty Rules of Love* by Elif SHAFARAK and *The Dervish Gate* by Ahmet ÜMIT; both attempt to interweave an account of Rumi with a story about the modern world.

73 MĪR KHWĀND, *History of the Early Kings of Persia*, tr. D. Shea, London 1832, 409–411.

lumined, in accordance with its nature, and nothing remains unknown. It is like the polishing of a mirror".⁷⁴

The story is told slightly differently in the earlier version of Ferdowsi: the philosopher darkens the mirror with dew, and pronounces "I work on your heart with divine knowledge until it becomes as bright as water and certain of truth". As Mohammed said, "the remembrance of God polishes the heart free of rust".⁷⁵ So in Ferdowsi the game with the mirror leads to Alexander's enlightenment, while in Mirkhond (as in Amir Khusrau) he is shown his mortal inadequacy. In Ferdowsi, as in Tarsusi, Alexander is a discoverer, but later versions of his story emphasise his failure to achieve the ultimate. The more Islamic the author, the less spiritual Alexander is allowed to be. The development is paralleled by one that Berlekamp traces in the history of Wonder Books: in the thirteenth century their dominant focus is on cosmic order, while by the end of the fourteenth century their emphasis is on the limits of human power.⁷⁶ Alexander's ultimate inadequacy is pointed up by his encounters with the hermit (deriving from the classical stories of Diogenes and Dandamis), who sometimes becomes identified with Plato in his cave, and with the Muslim saint Khidr (Persian Khezr).⁷⁷ Khidr too may be a mirror of the self,⁷⁸ but he is also the verso of Alexander, the sage who can achieve the immortality that Alexander cannot achieve.⁷⁹

In Attar's poem there is a story about a worldly fellow who cannot become the friend of Khidr:

"For our existences have different ends.
The waters of immortal life are yours
And you must always live; life is your cause
As death is mine – you wish to live, whilst I
Impatiently prepare myself to die".⁸⁰

Alexander looks in his mirror, but the world he sees reflected there is a symbol of conquest, not of enlightenment.

A poem of Hafez warns the reader:

"Jamshid took from the world nothing but the legend of the cup:
Take care not to bind the heart to worldly trappings".⁸¹

جمشید خزحکایت جام از جهان نبرد

74 Cited by BURCKHARDT, *Mirror* (n. 48), 118.

75 BURCKHARDT, *Mirror* (n. 48), 118. See also SELLS, *Mystical* (n. 34), discussing ibn 'Arabi, especially 72–74, 77 (Adam is the polishing of the mirror), 84 (the divine attributes become actuality in the polished mirror).

76 BERLEKAMP, *Wonder* (n. 11), 151.

77 In ATTAR, *Conference* (n. 18), 39 the worldly fellow is like Alexander, while Khidr becomes immortal. ATTAR, *Conference*, 181: Alexander needs Khidr.

78 P. FRANKE, J.C. BURGEL and C. RUYMBEKE (eds.), *Key to the Treasures of the Hakīm: Artistic and Humanistic Aspects of Nizāmī Ganjavī's Khamsa*, Leiden 2011, 113ff.

79 BARRY, *Figurative* (n. 29), 255–256.

80 ATTAR, *Conference* (n. 18), 39.

81 No. 477 HAFEZ, *Collected* (n. 7) (p. 577).

ز بهار دل میند بر اسباب دنیوی

The same moral is that of the common story about Alexander, who left the world empty-handed.

One must see beyond the mirror of nature to the divine essence:

“If you are not endowed with vision, do not look for union:
The bowl of Jamshid in moments of sightlessness yields no gain”.⁸²
چو مستعد نظر نیستی وصال مجوی
که جامجم نکند سود وقت بی نصری

Or as Omar Khayyam put it even more forcefully,

“I am the cup of Jamshid, but when that cup is broken, I am nothing”
من جام جم ولی چ و بشکستم هیچ

Alexander cannot see through the mirror beyond his conquests to eternity, and so he dies.

Conclusion/Abstract

This paper has traced a number of different uses of the image of the mirror in Persian accounts of Alexander. Beginning with Alexander's invention of the mirror as a weapon of military intelligence or assault, we have passed to the important image of the mirror as a way of perceiving the world. In this aspect the mirror comes to resemble the world-seeing cup of Jamshid. The symbolic importance of the mirror can be traced back to Plato's philosophy, which in a Neo-Platonist form became an inspiration of the Sufi mystics, who found in it an allegory of the soul's perception of, and assimilation to, the divine. The way that this image is played out in the story of Alexander's encounter with the Kayd of India shows him unable, like a true mystic, to use the mirror to go beyond his worldly obsession with conquest and worldly knowledge. Unlike Khidr, who is also a mirror of the self, he is unable to achieve immortality: he belongs to the realm of mortality.

82 No. 443 HAFEZ, *Collected* (n. 7) (p. 533); SALAMI, *Divan* (n.1) 451.

Wise and the Wiser: The Narratives on Alexander's Wisdom Defeated in Two Versions of Hebrew *Alexander Romance* (MS London Jews' College no 145 and MS Héb. 671.5 Paris, Bibliothèque Nationale)

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1 Introduction

There is a lot to look for in Jewish Alexander material and a lot to look into: from the I *Maccabees* to *Daniel*, to Josephus, to the Rabbinic material and the 14th and 15th c. *Romance* versions; from the textual analyses and connection between Arabic and Jewish material to the image of royalty and the speculations of the meaning of astrology in such texts, the Jewish Alexander texts are surprisingly rich in meanings and themes. Of special interest among them is the group of Hebrew versions of the *Alexander Romance*. A number of existing texts are known, according to Israel Kazis:¹ two manuscripts from Paris: MS Héb. 671.5 Bibliothèque Nationale² and Cod. Heb. 750.3, also known as *Sefer Toledot Aleksandros ha-Makdoni*,³ the London manuscript (MS 145, Jews' College),⁴ the manuscript from Modena (MS 53, Estense Library), published by I. Lévi in the 19th c.⁵ and very similar in version to the Bodleian manuscript reedited in 1972 by Rosalie Reich⁶ after its initial publication by Moses Gaster⁷ (MS Heb. D.11) as well as the manuscript from Damascus (described by the great Russian Jewish scholar Abraham Harkavy in 1892, but not known ever since),⁸ the Parma manuscript (MS Heb. 1087, Biblioteca I.B. de Rossi) and the version of Alexander's story in *Yosippon*, a medieval Hebrew translation/reworking of Josephus.⁹ Of these the first two texts, that is the Paris (MS Héb. 671.5) and London manuscripts, both available the editions of van Bekkum, will be of special interest for the present

1 I. KAZIS, *The Book of the Gestes of Alexander of Macedon: Sefer Toledot Alexandros ha-Makdoni: A Mediaeval Hebrew Version of the Alexander Romance by Immanuel Ben Jacob Bonfils*, Cambridge, Mass., 1962, 26–39.

2 W.J. VAN BEKKUM (ed.), *A Hebrew Alexander Romance According to MS Héb. 671.5 Paris, Bibliothèque Nationale*, Groningen 1994.

3 KAZIS, *Book* (n.1).

4 W.J. VAN BEKKUM (ed.), *A Hebrew Alexander Romance According to Ms. London, Jews' College no. 145*, Leuven 1992.

5 I. LÉVI, "Sefer Alexandras Mokdon", in: *Festschrift zum achtzigsten Geburtstage Moritz Steinschneiders* Leipzig 1896, 142–163.

6 R. REICH, *Tales of Alexander the Macedonian: A Medieval Hebrew Manuscript: [Sefer Aleksandrus Moḳdon] A Medieval Hebrew Manuscript, Text, and Translation with a Literary and Historical Commentary*, New York 1972.

7 M. GASTER, "An Old Hebrew Romance of Alexander", *JAS* 6 (1897), 485–549.

8 А. Я. ГАРКАВИ, *Неизданная версия романа об Александре*, Saint Petersburg 1892.

9 D. FLUSSER, (ed.) ספר יוסיפון, I–II Jerusalem 1978–1980

analysis. The choice is motivated mostly by the fact that these versions of the text are, despite their differences, still rather similar to one another and at the same time different from other known versions of the Hebrew *Alexander Romance*. Thus, an image emerging as a result of such an analysis will allow us to see how certain aspects of Alexander's portrayal have been realized in one particular group of Hebrew *Alexander Romances*, hopefully preparing grounds for a full analysis of the topic in all preserved Jewish Alexander material. Specifically, the following analysis would look at one of the key concepts of both Greek and Jewish culture as realized in the Hebrew romances: the idea of wisdom.

The texts treated here are ultimately based on the recension I² of Pseudo-Callisthenes and therefore, related to the γ version of the Greek text.¹⁰ The Hebrew text emerged, in both cases, as a translation for Arabic, but the exact version of the Arabic text, on which it was based, is unknown. There is a scholarly debate concerning a possible translator of the London version and the date of the translation's origins: time range from 12th to 14th c. is proposed for the origins of these versions. Both texts, as Kazis states, are "similar to each other in content and in order of events",¹¹ but there are some significant differences between them; also, both include elements absent from the Latin redaction.

The relation between the two translations of the *Romance* analysed here as well as their affinities with other Jewish Alexander texts was discussed in details by van Bekkum in his edition of MS London.¹² His most important conclusion is the similarity between the two versions and also their relative historicity and tendency to downplay (which does not mean eliminate) the more fantastic and legendary aspects of the adventures of Alexander, especially when compared with other Jewish versions of the *Romance*.

Since MS London and MS Paris are as such the reworking of the Arabic *Romance* tradition, they are, obviously, also, parts of the development of the Romance tradition. It would be a fascinating task to look closely at the differences, reworking and reinterpretations introduced to these versions by their Jewish translators and creators alone (some of them were noted, but not analysed in depth, by, the editor of both versions, van Bekkum, in the passage of his introduction, quoted above). Analysing the text from the point of view of the audience and the readership, it is interesting to take into account also the motifs known well from other traditions: to see why they were included in the Hebrew redactions and how they could be read and interpreted by the community for which they were created. What seems certain is the fact that their existence proves not only the widespread popularity of the *Romance* in this time period, but also the significance of the figure of Alexander in the Jewish culture.

Alexander as the wise king is a figure well-known from Jewish sources: in Josephus (*AJ* XI, 304–346) he is able to understand and interpret the *Book of Daniel*, in the *Romance* he prevails, due to his wisdom and his wits, over boastful foreign kings, in the Rabbinic texts as well as in the Hebrew *Romance* it is his wise decision to bury the remains of the prophet Jeremiah in Alexandria that saves the city from an infestation of snakes. Still, the image of Alexander the wise man is not the only one present there: looking closely, one can see that there are different kinds of wisdom, different levels of it and different ways of acquiring it –

10 G. CARY, *The Medieval Alexander*, Cambridge 1956, 51; see also VAN BEKKUM, *Hebrew* (n. 4), 15.

11 KAZIS, *Book* (n.1), 32.

12 VAN BEKKUM, *Hebrew* (n. 4), 19–30.

and that it is not always Alexander who comes out of the confrontations as the wisest one of all.

2 The Jewish Concept of Wisdom

It is not easy to decide which of the concepts present in the Hebrew versions of the *Romance* have been inherited from Greek tradition, which come from the long peregrination of motifs through Syriac and Arabic tradition and which are innovations introduced within the Jewish community. The Arabic tradition is obviously of special importance for the texts discussed here.¹³ The idea of wisdom and a figure of a wise man are among such problematic issues: they are of special importance for all the cultures that have contributed to the emergence of the Hebrew *Romance* and, at the same time, within these cultures the concept of a wise man is specific, based on local traditions, different. In the present paper, while keeping in mind the Greek (and, to some extent, also Arabic) context, I would like to concentrate on the Jewish understanding of the concept of wisdom and wise men in these particular reworking of the *Romance*. Such an approach is determined by the fact that I have specifically chosen here a perspective of the audience. Two Hebrew versions of the *Romance* that will be analysed here have been created with the Jewish audience in mind; that much is certain even though in some cases little is known about the details of their origins and authorship.¹⁴ The choice of Hebrew language is rather significant in this case, as is, in fact, a number of narrative shifts and changes, adapting the Alexander material for the use of the Jewish communities. From the audience's perspective, then, the use of the term „wisdom” as well as the interpretation of the scenes where wise men appear must take on a significant Jewish colouring, even if such a scene is a direct adaptation of a Greek model: the experience and cultural context will suggest the reading of such scenes and motifs within a well-known frame of references and associations. Therefore, within the scope of the present paper, it will be the Jewish context and Jewish understanding of wisdom and wise men that will matter most.

Basis Hebrew term for wisdom, חכמה, *chokhmah* (its equivalent in LXX is, of course, σοφία) appears no less than 150 times in the Hebrew Bible alone and is loaded with theological and philosophical meanings. Its connotations are broad: in a human being can denote a skill or ability, brilliance and intelligence, practical knowledge of legal, military or administrative kind; finally, it can describe ethical and religious knowledge, up to a point when, in Talmudic Hebrew, a term *wise man* is often used for a rabbi. The ultimate source of wisdom is God; as such, wisdom should be cherished and sought after (cf. *Pr.* 8:11: “for wisdom is better than rubies and all things that may be desired are not to be compared to it”).

13 On Arabic Alexander tradition see F. DOUFIKAR-AERTS, *Alexander Magnus Arabicus: A Survey of Alexander Tradition through Seven Centuries, from Pseudo-Callisthenes to Šūrī*, Paris 2010.

14 Van Bakkum in his introduction to the edition of MS London discusses in some details the character of both translations, the possible Western European origins of the source for the Arabic text on which they are both based and the differences between the two translations/reworking. He also dwells on the history of scholarship on both texts, concluding finally that we are dealing with two anonymous translations of common source, differing in their approach to translation: MS Paris seems more prone to elaborations and expansions (van Bakkum, *Hebrew* (n. 4), 24–34).

To sketch, even briefly, the development of the concept of wisdom in Hebrew literature is very much beyond the scope of the present paper; it has been done many times and from various methodological perspectives.¹⁵ Wisdom texts as such, both in Biblical and post biblical Hebrew literature, are numerous and well known, dating from the entire development of Biblical literature, from the *Book of Proverbs* to *Wisdom of Solomon* and *Ben Sira*; they are also rather varied in their approach, some concentrating on giving advice to men and describing examples of human wisdom, some analysing the Wisdom of God, often, in later texts, personified. The genre of wisdom texts is well established also in later Hebrew literature, especially the Talmudic treatises, as is, obviously, the concept of a wise man. It is not surprising, then, that in popular texts, such as the Alexander narratives, wisdom as a feature of characters and wise man as a figure have such a prominent role to play.

The figure of a wise man and various ideas of wisdom, are, quite predictably, omnipresent in the Hebrew versions of the *Alexander Romance* and ascribed to various characters. Wisdom is ascribed as one of the main characteristics to both the Egyptian people and to their king, Nectanebo. In this case it is wisdom defined as knowledge of the future as well as knowledge of the stars, astrology and the rules of divination. In Ms London already in the first sentence Nectanebo's people are described as *wise Egyptians*; in all of the them the epithet *chakham* is used for Nectanebo. His wisdom is of a practical kind: he is a seer, skilful in divination, a dream interpreter and a magician; these qualities – in a famous passage common for the majority of the *Romance* versions – make him, after the fall of his kingdom, the advisor to Philip, lover to Olympias and father to her son Alexander.

Interestingly enough, while the passage clearly has Greek antecedents, the notion of wisdom as a feature of Oriental nations is not absent from the Jewish thought (cf. Hiram, king of Tyre in I *Kings*): while wisdom, as the prophet states, is a gift from God ("For the LORD giveth wisdom: out of his mouth cometh knowledge and understanding", *Pr.* 2:6; cf. also *Megillah* 16: "He who says a wise thing is called a wise man [*chakham*], even if he be not a Jew"), it is not exclusively given to the children of Israel. Such a notion, as we will see, is of crucial importance for the creation of Alexander's character in all Jewish literature.

Wisdom is also one of the main qualities of young Alexander. A few examples should suffice to prove this rather obvious point. Even as a youth he proves himself wise. Once again in both versions of the *Romance* discussed here Alexander's miraculous progress in both knowledge and physical abilities is stressed and attributed to his *chokhmah*. A different kind of wisdom he presents when he persuades Philip to abandon his wrong ways and to accept again his lawful wife Olympias in both London and Paris versions; in these passages his role as a wise advisor to the king is stressed, up to the point when he says to Philip: "I will not speak to you as so to father, but as friend to a friend" (Ms Paris), or "brother to brother" (Ms London). Also it is Alexander's wisdom that allows him to triumph over the boastful and self-centred king Nicolaos and brings him his first taste of glory. In this case, Alexander's wisdom is of a moral rather than practical or military kind: he bides his time and exercises humility together with self-control, which gives him victory over an enemy who does not possess these qualities.

15 For introduction study on the concept of wisdom in Hebrew Biblical tradition see e. g. R.J. CLIFFORD, *The Wisdom Literature*, Nashville 1998.

When he becomes king, Alexander also often exercises wisdom: the two versions of the *Romance* are full of stories presenting various faces of Alexander the wise. When after his coronation and his wedding with Rhoxane his new subject prostrate themselves before Alexander as they did before their idols, he rebukes them harshly and reminds them that they should only bow to the Name of God; Alexander presents here a very sound judgement of his own position as just a mortal – at least, a judgement sound from a Jewish point of view, if rather contrary to the historical accounts. This story seems similar in details to the narrative of Alexander in Jerusalem, known from Josephus and also from numerous other narratives, both within the Jewish culture and outside of it.¹⁶

Not much later he proves his practical wisdom during the march to the land of Albania, inhabited by skilful warriors. The use of large dogs in battle makes the local forces nearly invincible – until Alexander comes up with a clever plan of using pigs to distract the dogs and thus wins the battle. Conversely, his knowledge of natural phenomena, also considered part of wisdom in Jewish traditions, helps him to quiet down the soldiers, frightened of sudden and unnaturally strong wind. It is only thanks to Alexander's explanation (the wind in this place always becomes very strong at night, it is in fact a natural phenomenon) that the soldiers cease to fear the hurricane. These are only some of the examples of Alexander's wisdom, which, together with his courage, his royal charisma and kindness and his fear of God, forms one of the key features of the king's character.

3 *Alien Wisdom and Alexander*

But it is not so that Alexander remains this wise man forever and excels in wisdom in every circumstances. There are rather significant and interesting scenes in both versions analysed here which show the Macedonian king not winning, but losing in the game of wits, showing not wisdom, but foolishness and stubbornness. A look into a number of crucial examples of such scenes from MS London and MS Paris would be enough to point at the importance of such a motif.

The most obvious example of its use is the debate between Alexander and Dindymus, the king of the Brahmans. The exchange of letters between Alexander and the Brahman ruler has been analysed by scholars many times and in various contexts and it remains one of the main scenes in which Alexander is criticized and sharply rebuked by those wiser than himself.¹⁷ In both MS Paris and MS London, in the debate between Alexander and Dindymus, wisdom and its understanding is indeed one of the topics debated between the Macedonian king and the wise man. It is with the theme of wisdom that Alexander starts his exchange with the Brahmans: in his letter he asks if they could share their specific kind of wisdom with him; he presents himself a lover of wisdom (in MS London he mentions his

16 The episode of Alexander's visit to Jerusalem is probably the most often discussed motif to be found in the Jewish Alexander material. See on this topic especially S.J.D. COHEN, "Alexander the Great and Jaddus the High Priest According to Josephus", *Association for Jewish Studies Review* 7/8 (1982/1983), 41–68, R. STONEMAN, "Jewish Traditions on Alexander the Great", *StudPhilon* 6 (1994), 37–53; and the classic account of A. MOMIGLIANO ("Flavius Josephus and Alexander's Visit to Jerusalem", *Athenaeum* 57 (1979), 442–448).

17 On the basic account see R. STONEMAN, "Naked Philosophers: The Brahmans in the Alexander Historians and the Alexander Romance", *JHS* 115 (1995), 99–114 and G.H. HANSEN, "Alexander und die Brahmanen", *Clio* 43/45 (1965), 351–380.

training with Aristotle as a proof) and he suggests that for the Brahmins sharing their wisdom with him would be beneficial, since wisdom is compared to a lamp, useful because other lights can be kindled from it.

The theme of wisdom returns in Dindymus' answer. In both accounts the Brahman leader criticizes Alexander for his quest, explaining to him that he neither understands the concept of wisdom properly nor can he comprehend the wisdom of the Brahmins. Moreover, Dindymus suggests that Alexander is unable even to understand the teachings of his own master, Aristotle. The reason for it is his own lifestyle: his preference for seeking glory, his boastfulness and vanity. The detailed analysis of the Brahman motif in Jewish Alexander tradition lies beyond the scope of this paper, especially that it has been done before.¹⁸ Here, it is enough to stress that the theme of wisdom is one of the crucial motifs here and that Alexander is not necessarily the character who is presented as the wise one here.

Another similar motif present in shortened and concise form in MS London and in more developed shape in MS Paris is the meeting with the Gymnosophists. The motif in the present versions of the *Romance* is abridged and its meaning does not seem as obvious as elsewhere, but one may add that it is rather popular in Talmudic treatises and therefore deeply rooted in the Jewish culture. There, the Gymnosophists are replaced by the Elders from the South, ostensibly not Indian, but Jewish, and Alexander definitely loses his confrontation with them.¹⁹ The Paris version has an interesting motif here.²⁰ Alexander, in his debate with Gymnosophists, makes a definite statement about various kinds of wisdom: while the Gymnosophists have been given miraculous qualities by God, he, Alexander, also has gifts specific for himself only: by God's will he is a winner and a conqueror born. "He [God] gave me strength and the courage to be victorious and to be glorified. I cannot leave my character just as God has put in my heart (...). When I want to rest, my character does not leave me alone and the design of my knowledge [*daat*, another term often denoting wisdom] is structured <in a manner> that it is his intention to get dominion and rule".²¹ The passage points clearly at the fact that Alexander possesses his own, special kind of knowledge, one typical for the king and conqueror. In this particular version of the *Romance* the dialogue is ambiguous and its result not obvious: it is difficult to say which side, Alexander or the Gymnosophists, comes out as victorious in this competition of wits. On the one hand, the Gymnosophists rebuke Alexander because of his desire of immortality and glory. This seems to be the intention of the entire sequence. Firstly, Alexander offers the Gymnosophists whatever they desire, but all they want is to ask him one question. They enquire of him if he "found the ability to escape from death" (265b); he answers that, had he found it, he would not tell them. The Gymnosophists then comment ironically on the king's pursuits of glory: why would he want it, when it is obvious that one day he would die and someone else would replace him and be glorified in his place? To this, Alexander answers

18 On the comprehensive development of the Brahman motif see R. STONEMAN, *Alexander the Great: A Life in Legend*, New Haven/London 2008, 91–106.

19 On this Talmudic motif see O. AMITAY, "Alexander in *Bavli Tamid*: In Search for a Meaning", in: R. Stoneman, K. Erickson and I. Netton, (eds.) *The Alexander Romance in Persia and the East*, Groningen 2012, 349–365.

20 MS Paris 265b–266a.

21 VAN BEKKUM, *Hebrew* (n. 4), 101.

with the lines quoted above. In a way, he has the last word here: he explains to the Gymnosophists that both them and himself have their own kinds of wisdom, specific to their vocations and their ways of life. The result of the confrontation remain therefore uncertain, with Alexander's final remarks proving that despite the foolishness of his pursuit of glory and immortality he does, in fact, possess some kind of royal wisdom.

The same scene is longer and more elaborate in MS London, comprising the entire chapter 45. Here, the sequence of questions is longer and more reminiscent of the lists of questions exchanged by Alexander and the wise men in other versions of the *Romance*: themes such as paradoxical questions ("who is more existent: the living or the dead") and typical formulas concerning power, rule and human conditions appear in the first part of the exchange, where Alexander is the one asking the questions. Among those there is one pair question-answer concerning wisdom:

"He [apparently Alexander] asked him: "Who has more wisdom, man or beast"? He [a Gymnosophist] replied: "There are beasts, to which no one can be compared <in wisdom> in the slightest way, and all beasts together are more clever than all mankind apart from those who hate the luxury of this world like we do, because we belong indeed to mankind". (45)

Here there is no doubt about the winning and the losing side. Alexander asks a seemingly obvious questions and gets the paradoxical, yet at the same time rather scathingly ironic answer. Indeed, say the Gymnosophists, even beasts are wiser than these men who love the luxury of this world; it is even difficult to treat these men as belonging to mankind. This seems to be the meaning of the Gymnosophists' answer and it is not difficult to notice that, if such is the case, Alexander does not count as a wise man. Moreover, he cannot even be listed among men at all!

Only in the second part of the same chapter we have a passage corresponding to the lines from MS Paris quoted above. The passage in MS London is longer and more elaborate, which is why it is easier to analyse. Here, as in the MS London text, the Gymnosophists ask Alexander a question and get answer identical in meaning, if not in words: that he does not know the secret of immortality and even if he did, he would not share it. As in the previous text, the king is rebuked for it by the Gymnosophists and reminded that he is mortal and that his glory will fade. The answer in this version is more detailed and its meaning becomes clearer. Alexander spends his time seeking *vanities*, wasting his short time given by God to *make his soul perfect* on vain pursuits of glory and by that, he becomes his own worst enemy. Still, Alexander answers them also in the way reminiscent of MS Paris: he explains the specific kind of his own character and stresses the fact that he cannot change it. There is no explicit mention here that such a character is typical for kings, as the one in the other version, but the important thing is the fact that Alexander gets his chance to explain his stance in the matter. Final lines of the passage underline the fact that Alexander does indeed own specific royal traits: despite the Gymnosophists' ironical stance towards him, he greets them and does not punish them for their audacity.

In the context of the aforementioned motif of the thirst for immortality and glory it would be interesting to draw attention to two other scenes in the Hebrew *Romance* texts which show Alexander defeated by those wiser than himself or by his own vanity and curiosity, unworthy of a wise man. Firstly, there is the story about Queen Kandake, popular in

other versions of the *Romance* as well, a part of which tells the story of Alexander coming incognito to her court. Yet Kandake had outsmarted the Macedonian ruler: since she had managed to obtain his portrait, she recognized him immediately, which, at a time, left his dependent on her and made him feel defeated by a woman. The motif of Alexander outsmarted by women in the *Romance* is not limited to Kandake: a well-known story of the letter of the Amazons to Alexander is another example; one may add that it was known to the Jewish audience, since it appears in the *Tamid*, a Talmudic treatise that also comprises other Alexander material (*Tamid* 32a–b). A wise king is here defeated by women in the exchange of wits and effectively prohibited from attacking them and proving his superiority in his customary military way. Both the story of Kandake and that of the Amazons are paradoxical (a man outsmarted by women, a conqueror stopped in his conquest, a great warrior king at the mercy of a woman); they may bring to mind – with all the obvious differences – Biblical stories of great men undone by women: Samson defeated by Delilah (*Judges* 16) or Solomon falling under the influence of lovers and concubines (1 *Kings* 11).

Secondly, there is the curious little episode, when Alexander descends to a cave and inside he meets two divine beings, Sesonchosis the Ancient and Serapis the Oracle.²² The king's companion, Candaulus, had previously stated that he knew from the accounts of the wise men that this was a “pure cave”, as he calls it, a place of knowledge and power: “whatever request someone makes”, I quote, “is granted”. Alexander has a chance to achieve something special here; he, however, fails the test, because, not unlike Parzival in the Grail Castle, he fails to ask a proper question and falls into the simplest trap possible: he wants to know the date of his own death. The god informs him that this cannot be revealed to him; he only informs Alexander that he will be poisoned by a close friend, whom he trusts; then the gods disappear from before the eyes of the king. Here we see Alexander behaving rather unreasonably. He has a chance to achieve something great, to have a wish, possibly a wish to be immortal, fulfilled, and he fails to do so – and fails in a very common, very human way. In this scene he is not the preternaturally wise youth who rebukes kings and reconciles marriages; he does what an average man would do, he gets undone by curiosity and pride and he asks the wrong question. Not only does he behave like an average man here, he is also treated as such by the gods: they make no exception for the great Alexander, just inform him curtly that “[i]t is not proper to tell people when they will die, lest they stand still and become weak and do not perform their work in this world for which they are assigned” (MS Paris, 137). The scene is similarly constructed in the other version analysed here (MS London 62). Also in this version Alexander's question is about the day of his death; and just like in the other version, he is criticized for it and told by the gods that he shall not get the answer.

Why do we see Alexander defeated, his wisdom confronted with that of others and found lacking? And is he the only one treated so? The answer to the second part of the

22 The very fact that Alexander encounters here two pagan gods is interesting, especially in the light of the translators' tendency to generally expurgate the texts from its pagan contents (VAN BEKKUM, *Hebrew* (n. 4) introduction with non-numbered pages; VAN BEKKUM, *Hebrew* (n. 4), 25–6). The fact that despite this tendency the names of Sesonchosis and Serapis were preserved here could possibly be explained by the popularity of the story, well-known from the Alexander material. Still, the fact that the divine identity of the gods remained unchanged is rather surprising.

question is a certain no. The answer to the first one seems connected to the broader issue of Alexander's representation in the Jewish culture.

This image, as one may guess, is ambivalent, but much less ambivalent and often more positive than many known from various redactions of Alexander narratives. Alexander in Jewish literature is often, as I tried to show elsewhere,²³ a benevolent foreign king, chosen and sent by God to rule the world and thus to guarantee a place in the world and proper legal solutions for the Jewish populace. As such, he is under special protection of God, and thus, he shows wisdom and understanding which are often associated with a Jewish wise man (e. g. in Josephus he reads and interprets correctly a book of a prophet). This is one image of Alexander in Jewish culture, derived from Jewish Greek literature and the *Talmud*. The image of Alexander in the *Romance* versions discussed here, however, is influenced not only by the Talmudic tradition, which is in many ways independent from the *Romance* and which, according to Kazis' opinion, draws on different and often older, possibly oral tradition of Alexander narratives. The Talmudic vision of Alexander must have been ingrained deeply in the consciousness of the Jewish audience and its influence over their reading of Alexander cannot, I believe be discarded lightly.

What about Alexander then? In the narratives, as we saw, he often excels in wisdom, but from time to time his wisdom fails him: he makes a stupid decision, he loses a battle of wits, he fails to notice an obvious solution and makes an error of judgement. In the Talmudic versions, he is often defeated by those possessing Jewish wisdom, most famously the Elders of the South. Here, in the *Romance*, we see him defeated by a woman and undone by his own impatience and vanity. We can look for the general model here, since the stories are not unique for the Jewish versions of the *Romance*; we can try and analyse the development of Alexander's character and maybe look for possible similarities with the more historical accounts, like that of Curtius Rufus, in which we observe the deterioration of Alexander's character, his growing pride, vanity and stubbornness. But certainly there is also a moral lesson here, very much in the spirit of the Biblical vision of greatness in a man (even the greatest, like David, and the wisest, like Solomon, fall, and Alexander is no exception). He fails, because his wisdom is imperfect, as every human wisdom must be. It does not make him lesser, only human; and even though from time to time he loses his way, he is still, all in all, a wise king – when the prodigy in Babylon prophesises his death, the sages explaining it state that “the upper half [of the prodigy] is a sign and proof of your kingship, led by human wisdom; [the part's] motion stops, so your rule will stop” (MS Paris, 149). All in all, the main moral lessons derived from these stories is simple: Alexander may be great, but it is always God who is the greatest.

23 A. KŁĘCZAR, “The Kingship of Alexander the Great in the Jewish Versions of the Alexander Narrative”, in: Stoneman, Erickson and Netton (eds.), *Alexander* (n.19), 339–349.

Alexander's 'Policy of Fusion' and German Ancient History between 1933 and 1945¹

Josef Wiesehöfer (Kiel)

I

“This ceremony (the mass wedding at Susa, J.W.) and later events, especially Alexander's prayer on the Opis, as well as Plutarch's reflection on the subject (in the words: ‘He himself, crowned with garlands, was the first to raise the marriage hymn as though he were singing a song of truest friendship over the union of the two greatest and most mighty peoples; for he, of one maid the bridegroom, and at the same time of all the brides the escort, as a father and sponsor united them in the bonds of wedlock.’) all gave grounds for the formulation of a controversial academic theory on Alexander striving to unite the various peoples of his vast empire.”

This is how our host introduces, in his book on Alexander, the topic of this contribution: Alexander's alleged idea of a “unity of mankind”.² All of you know that this idea of William Tarn's is still highly debated³ and that Oliver Stone's *Alexander* still held that Alexander had been driven by the desire to unite Greeks and Persians, even all the peoples of the earth.⁴ In contrast to that, recent scholarship has increasingly pointed to, e.g., the practical use of the unions between Macedonian officers and Iranian noble women: The offspring of those unions, which, like its mothers, was forbidden to accompany the fathers back to Macedonia, was meant to become part of a new imperial elite, raised within and familiar with the worlds of both parents.⁵

In my article, I would like to discuss German Ancient Historians' dealings with the concept of “unity of mankind” or, as it is still designated in Germany, the “policy of fusion” (“Verschmelzungspolitik”) in a time when official racist views of history were highly critical of ideas of cosmopolitanism or fusions of peoples.⁶

1 This contribution owes its main ideas and results to the work of and the discussions with my dear friend and colleague Reinhold Bichler (Innsbruck).

2 K. NAWOTKA, *Alexander the Great*, Newcastle upon Tyne 2010, 345.

3 D.S. RICHTER, *Cosmopolis: Imagining Community in Late Classical Athens and the Early Roman Empire*, Oxford 2011, 13–15.

4 TH. HARRISON, “Oliver Stone, Alexander, and the Unity of Mankind” in: P. Cartledge and F.R. Greenland (eds.), *Responses to Oliver Stone's Alexander: Film, History and Cultural Studies*, Madison 2010.

5 Cf., e.g. A.B. BOSWORTH, “Alexander and the Iranians”, in: *JHS* 100 (1980), 1–21; H.-U. WIEMER, *Alexander der Große*, Munich 2015², 162.

6 The most important contributions to this topic are: R. BICHLER, “Alexander der Große und das NS-Geschichtsbild (2001)”, in: R. Bichler, *Historiographie – Ethnographie – Utopie. Gesammelte Schriften*, III, Wiesbaden 2001/2010, 77–109; R. BICHLER, “Wie lange wollen wir noch mit Alexander dem

II

In the 1920s, the “crisis of historicism” was on everyone’s lips in German historical scholarship. Against the background of the German defeat in the First World War, which was perceived as a catastrophe, more and more Ancient Historians demanded the renunciation of Theodor Mommsen’s and his pupils’ positivist research design and their scientific postulate. They put in their place demands for a rehabilitation of antiquity as a meaningful historical model and for bridging the gap between scholarship and daily life.⁷ Alleged positivist source exegesis had to be abandoned in favour of a historical understanding of the “nature” and “spirit” (“Wesen und Geist”) of epochs, personalities or historical phenomena. Comprehensive reconstructions of historical events and current syntheses were to replace the detailed hard work of the students of the Great Master, thereby contributing to the understanding of antiquity as well as the present; this reconsideration was accompanied, in accordance with the predominantly conservative political convictions of most Ancient Historians, by widespread declarations of a belief in monarchy, power and Führer State. On top of that, some of those scholars were known for their Aristocratic-elitist hubris, a widely held anti-democratic attitude and partly already hints of social Darwinism, pseudo-scientific studies of race, conceptions of ‘racial hygiene’ or openly shown anti-Semitic attitudes.

Before 1933, the (greatly differing) Nazi views of antiquity had usually been incompatible with the views and perceptions of most German historians, even if it cannot be denied that there had been certain pre-Nazi dispositions in that direction – not least the appreciation of major leader figures, the attempt to empathize with the essence of ancient phenomena and the application of racial theories. In the field of Greek History, some younger scholars, such as Helmut Berve, had already connected “intuitive insights”: an “emphasis on the (national) community and the will, the rejection of individualism, the acceptance of violence and selection and a recourse to the nature of ‘peoples’ as well as ‘tribes’ and ‘races’”⁸ with a strict rejection of Universal History à la Eduard Meyer.⁹ Such ‘up-to-date’ approaches were not entirely new, as historiography of the twenties was not uniform and students and grand students of Mommsen’s represented varied fields of research.

It is not surprising after what has been said that many of the younger scholars of that time, until very recently, believed that the 1920s had been characterized by a reorientation of their scholarly discipline – in the sense of a coping with the defeat of 1918, the overcoming of the deplorable political and economic situation in the Weimar Republic or the rejection of an optimistic research positivism. They furthermore stated that they had then felt a sense of new beginnings, especially a new belief in the relevance of their own academic discipline.¹⁰ At first glance, the self-consciousness of their representatives within the

Großen siegen? Karl Christ zum Gedenken (2009)”, in: R. Bichler, *Historiographie – Ethnographie – Utopie. Gesammelte Schriften*, III, Wiesbaden 2009/2010, 207–240.

7 H. FLASHAR, (ed.) *Alturtumswissenschaft in den 20er Jahren. Neue Fragen und Impulse*, Stuttgart 1995.

8 S. REBENICH, “Alte Geschichte in Demokratie und Diktatur: Der Fall Helmut Berve”, in: *Chiron* 31 (2001), 466–467.

9 CH. ULF, “Ideologie als Grundlage für Abgrenzung und Spezifik der Antike bei Ed. Meyer, H. Berve, E. Kornemann, W. Jaeger und V. Ehrenberg”, in: B. Näf, (ed.), *Antike und Alturtumswissenschaft in der Zeit von Faschismus und Nationalsozialismus. Kolloquium Universität Zürich 14.-17. Oktober 1998*, Mandelbachtal/Cambridge 2001, 307–319.

10 B. NÄF, “Deutungen und Interpretationen der Griechischen Geschichte in den zwanziger Jahren”, in: H.

group of professional historians and a university-educated public and the then actually observable broad public impact of Ancient History seem to confirm this disciplinary optimism and the historical necessity of that reorientation. When asked, however, why at that time only a few pioneering research approaches had been developed, why, at the same time, many of the "approaches to revitalize the discipline ... had offered no resistance against their baleful misuse by Nazism",¹¹ such retrospective statements could not give satisfactory answers.

III

It is no wonder then that the controversy on Alexander's "policy of fusion" in the years between 1933 and 1945 gained special significance in the German public and in German Ancient History, since it concerned issues of world monarchy and cosmopolitanism. It must be recognized, however, that in National Socialist times there never was a uniform view of Antiquity or Alexander, and this applies both to the statements of the political elite and to historical research. On the other hand, it can be held that approaches in "racial theory" ("Rassenkunde") – already extant in minority opinions before – became increasingly important in the popular and professional discourse over time.

As for Greek History, those theories related, on the one hand, to the time of Philip and Alexander, which was often seen as a time of decline in Greece that needed explanation. On the other hand, they referred to the relationship between Greeks/Macedonians and Persians, who were not newly discovered as Indo-Europeans and Aryans, but whose defeats by the Hellenic League and Alexander were also in need of explanation. Developments for the worse were now explained in biological-racist ways, and terms such as "decomposition" ("Zersetzung"), "degeneration" ("Entartung") or "denordicising" ("Entnordnung"), i.e. the reduction of the "Nordic" share in a race, increasingly entered popular as well as academic debates.

Among the most prominent Nazis, it was especially Alfred Rosenberg, the leading ideologue and later notorious leader of the so-called "Imperial Ministry for the Occupied Eastern Territories", who became concerned about Alexander's plans. In his opinion, neither a "universal monarchy" nor a "fusion of peoples" had been in the Macedonian king's mind, but the blood mixture of the racially related Persians and Greeks in order to avoid further conflicts between the two. According to Rosenberg, the fact that these plans had not become reality, was partly due to the "bastardization" of the Persians by the lower Semitic-Oriental class, and partly by the fact that the "Nordic-Macedonian Grafting Cultures" ("Pflropfkulturen") had not been able to enforce "their concepts of honour" against "Semites, Babylonians and Syrians" (A. Rosenberg, *Der Mythos des 20. Jahrhunderts*, Munich⁶ 1933, 152). Rosenberg's *Mythos des 20. Jahrhunderts* was one of the most controversial works written by a National Socialist – not least because of its decidedly anti-Church and anti-Christian tendency. However, one should not overestimate its impact on the German public.

Flashar (ed.), *Die Altertumswissenschaft in den 20er Jahren. Neue Fragen und Impulse*, Stuttgart 1995, 275f.

11 NÄF, "Deutungen" (n. 10), 276.

This is quite different with the books of the social anthropologist Friedrich Karl Günther, the main protagonist of the “Nordic” thinking.¹² They found hundreds of thousands of readers and even highly influenced German textbooks of the time. Also with Günther, we find the following patterns of explanation: the “denordicising” of the Persian elites here, the loss of “character” of the “largely rural Indo-Germanic race” (“Indogermanentums”) of Macedon there. It is not surprising that for Günther, “Hellenism and the way of living of the Alexandrians” (the “Alexandrinertum”) represented “the intellectual achievements of a denordicised and degenerated time” (H.F.K. Günther, *Rassengeschichte des hellenischen und des römischen Volkes*, Munich 1929, 61).

Although he understated it in his Memoirs (F. Schachermeyr, *Ein Leben zwischen Wissenschaft und Kunst*, Wien 1984, 148, 157), the relationship between the Austrian Ancient Historian Fritz Schachermeyr¹³ and his Jena colleague Günther in the early 1930s must have been quite close, if only because of their Nazi engagement and common terminology.¹⁴ In the years between 1933 and 1945, Schachermeyr, one of the main protagonists of racist studies in German Ancient History, rated Alexander’s policy of fusion markedly negative: the Macedonian had not only allowed the mixture of the blood of his racially superior compatriots and that of the Iranians – the latter having already been damaged by an “Asiatic (i.e., Semitic, J.W.) racial introgression” (“Rasseneinkreuzung”). He was also to blame for the fact that the race-protecting principle of “Volkhaftigkeit” had been abandoned (F. Schachermeyr, *Indogermanen und Orient. Ihre kulturelle und machtpolitische Auseinandersetzung im Altertum*, Stuttgart 1944, 242), that, apart from the Macedonians, also Greeks and other peoples of the Aegean had been drawn into “the chaos of blood” (Schachermeyr, *Indogermanen*, 243). All this, in Schachermeyr’s view, had ultimately led to the dissolution of the Nordic impact on race and the “pseudo-ideal” of a “world citizenship” in Hellenistic times (F. Schachermeyr, “Die Aufgaben der Alten Geschichte im Rahmen der nordischen Weltgeschichte”, in: *Vergangenheit und Gegenwart* 23, 1933, 599).

The second prominent German National Socialist Ancient Historian, Helmut Berve¹⁵, from 1940 to 1943 Rector of the University of Leipzig, rated Alexander’s policy of fusion

12 For Günther, cf. E. WEISENBURGER, “Hans Friedrich Karl Günther, Professor für Rassenkunde”, in: M. Kißener and J. Scholtyssek, (eds.), *Die Führer der Provinz. NS-Biographien aus Baden und Württemberg*, Konstanz 1999, 161–199; E. FREISLEBEN, *Grundelemente der Rassenkunde und Rassenhygiene der Weimarer Zeit. Eine Untersuchung zu zwei Standardwerken*, PhD Berlin 2003; P. SCHWANDT, *Hans F.K. Günther: Porträt, Entwicklung und Wirken des rassistisch-nordischen Denkens*, Saarbrücken 2008.

13 For Schachermeyr, see B. NÄF, “Der Althistoriker Fritz Schachermeyr und seine Geschichtsauffassung im wissenschaftsgeschichtlichen Rückblick”, in: *Storia della Storiografia* 26 (1994), 83–100; M. PESDITSCHKE, *Barbar, Kreter, Arier. Leben und Werk des Althistorikers Fritz Schachermeyr*, I-II, Saarbrücken 2009; M. PESDITSCHKE, “Schachermeyr, Fritz”, in: P. Kuhlmann and H. Schneider (eds.), *Geschichte der Altertumswissenschaften. Biographisches Lexikon* (= Der Neue Pauly, Supplemente, VI), Stuttgart/Weimar 2012b, 1120–1121.

14 In his works, Schachermeyr considered Günther’s ideas quite positive (cf. PESDITSCHKE, *Barbar* (n. 13), I, 194). – For Günther in Jena, cf. U. HOBFELD, “Die Jenaer Jahre des “Rasse-Günther” von 1930 bis 1935”, in: *Medizinhistorisches Journal* 34 (1999), 47–103.

15 For Berve, see K. CHRIST, “Helmut Berve (1896–1979)”, in: K. Christ, *Neue Profile der Alten Geschichte*, Darmstadt 1990, 125–187; L.-M. GÜNTHER, “Helmut Berve. Professor in München 6.3.1943–12.12.1945”, in: J. Seibert (ed.), *100 Jahre Alte Geschichte an der Ludwig-Maximilians-Universität München (1901–2001)*, Berlin 2002, 69–105, and especially REBENICH, “Alte” (n. 8).

in a completely different, much more positive way. He had nothing but scorn and derision for racial theories à la Schachermeyr. For Berve, Alexander appears to have been a severe and far-sighted “racial breeder”¹⁶, who – not least for military reasons – had worked hard to merge the Macedonian-Hellenic and the equally superior Iranian race (“kraftvolles Volkstum Irans”) in order to confer more stability on his empire (H. Berve, “Die Verschmelzungspolitik Alexanders des Großen”, in: *Klio* 31 (1938), 135–168, esp. 159).

Categories such as “foreign infiltration” (“Überfremdung”) or “bonds of blood and spirit” (“Bande von Blut und Geist”) were introduced into scholarship by the Marburg historian Fritz Taeger¹⁷ who came to an overall negative assessment of Alexander’s policy of fusion (F. Taeger, *Das Altertum. Geschichte und Gestalt*, Stuttgart 1939, I, 426). However, one must give Taeger credit for the fact that his work, unlike that of his colleagues Berve and Schachermeyr, also included views that were contrary to Nazi ideas – for example, his portrayal of Judaism as a culturally creative, not a disintegrating historical driving force.¹⁸

From 1918 to 1936, Ernst Kornemann¹⁹ had held the chair at the University of Breslau. In his 1943 study on Alexander, he assumed that the Macedonian king had planned a Macedonian-Persian state, similar to that of the Achaemenids with its symbiosis of Medes and Persians. Alexander was, unlike his successors, acquitted of being behind the disastrous developments of Hellenism (E. Kornemann, “Alexander und seine Makedonen”, in: Kornemann, E., *Gestalten und Reiche. Essays zur Alten Geschichte*, Wiesbaden 1943, 38–59). We find similar arguments in the works of Kornemann’s student Peter Julius Junge,²⁰ a devoted National Socialist, who finally died in Stalingrad. He, who, with his broad view of antiquity, had followed in Eduard Meyer’s footsteps, spoke in his book on Darius I of Alexander’s plans to create a universal rule (“Weltherrentum”) of Macedonians and Iranians. He presented the king as a prophetic “Nordic Warrior King” (“nordischer Heerkönig”) (P.J. Junge, *Dareios I. König der Perser*, Leipzig 1944, 148–149).²¹

Even before the National Socialists’ rise to power, the Prague Historian Victor Ehrenberg, whose path would lead him into exile in England in 1939,²² had warned of Nazi

16 BICHLER, “Alexander” (n. 6), 88.

17 For Taeger, see K. CHRIST, “Fritz Taeger (1894–1960), Althistoriker”, in: I. Schnack, (ed.), *Marburger Gelehrte in der ersten Hälfte des 20. Jahrhunderts*, Marburg 1977, 544–552; J. WIESEHÖFER, “Fritz Taeger (1935–1960), Victor Ehrenberg und der Alte Orient”, in: V. Losemann, K. Ruffing and K. Schaal (eds.), *140 Jahre Seminar für Alte Geschichte in Marburg* (in press); V. LOSEMAN, “Brauchen Sie keinen Althistoriker? Alte Geschichte in Marburg nach 1945”, in: V. Losemann, K. Ruffing and K. Schaal (eds.), *140 Jahre Seminar für Alte Geschichte in Marburg* (in press).

18 WIESEHÖFER, “Fritz ” (n. 17) (in press)

19 For Kornemann, see E. BALTRUSCH, “Kornemann, Ernst”, in: P. Kuhlmann and H. Schneider (eds.), *Geschichte der Altertumswissenschaften. Biographisches Lexikon* (= Der Neue Pauly, Supplemente, VI), Stuttgart/Weimar 2012, 663–664.

20 For Junge, see CH. ULF, “Franz Miltner”, in: R. Bichler (ed.), *100 Jahre Alte Geschichte in Innsbruck. Franz Hampl zum 75. Geburtstag*, Innsbruck 1985, 58.

21 For Junge’s view of the Achaemenid Empire, see J. WIESEHÖFER, “Das Bild der Achaimeniden in der Zeit des Nationalsozialismus”, in: A. Kuhrt and H. Sancisi-Weerdenburg (eds.), *Achaemenid History*, III, Leiden 1988, 13–14 – For Franz Miltner’s, i.e. Junge’s ‘Habitationsvater’s’, critique on his student’s view of the Persians, cf. M. PESDITSCHKE, “Franz Miltner (1901–1959)”, in: G. Brands and M. Maischberger (eds.), *Lebensbilder. Klassische Archäologen und der Nationalsozialismus I*, Rahden/Westf. 2012a, 191 n. 168.

22 For Ehrenberg, see K. EHLING, ““Vielleicht werde ich auch einmal wieder Deutschland besuchen kön-

historical ideologemes and their adoption by his colleagues. Well connected to the mainstream in his negative assessment of the Greek world of the fourth century and the Hellenistic world, Ehrenberg implied, in 1935 – in contrast to Schachermeyr or Berve, who later polemically attacked him for that (H. Berve, “Zur Kulturgeschichte des Alten Orients”, in: *Archiv für Kulturgeschichte* 25, 1935, 216–230) – that Alexander had had the idea of a “cosmopolitanism that no longer asked for nationality and ethnic origin” (V. Ehrenberg, “Alexander der Große”, in: V. Ehrenberg, *Ost und West. Studien zur geschichtlichen Problematik der Antike*, Brunn et al. 1935, 140–176, at 175). Not Alexander’s racial consciousness, “but only his personal and increasing awareness of his royal position” had been the “psychological reason” for his policy of fusion (Ehrenberg, *Ost*, 163).

That the idea of cosmopolitanism could also be connected with Nazi racial theory, is illustrated by a work of Walther Kolbe²³ of 1936 (W. Kolbe, *Die Weltreichsidee Alexanders des Großen. Vortrag gehalten bei der Jahresversammlung der Freiburger Wissenschaftlichen Gesellschaft am 23. November 1935*, Freiburg 1936): Here, Alexander longs for the “reconciliation of all peoples” (“Versöhnung aller Völker”) by means of blood mixture, but such cosmopolitan ideas, in Kolbe’s view, are always connected with the loss of the “inner life force” (“innere Lebenskraft”) of an empire or state. Kolbe’s more recent historical example for that disastrous development is the awarding of French citizenship to Africans and Asians. In the works of Hans-Erich Stier, a student of Eduard Meyer,²⁴ we recognize, however, a traditional view of Alexander’s actions, devoid of racialist ideologemes: Stier’s Alexander appears, in Reinhold Bichler’s words, as a “Champion of the West” (“Sachwalter des Okzidents”) who, however, increasingly forgets about his own cultural roots (H.-E. Stier, *Geschichte Griechenlands und des Hellenismus*, in: *Die Neue Propyläen-Weltgeschichte*, I, Berlin 1940, 175–272).²⁵

The range of historical reflection on Alexander’s policy of fusion within and outside the framework of the regime’s ideological expectations is finally proven by the 1943 lecture of the Bonn Ancient Historian Fritz Oertel,²⁶ who on the one hand – with all due respect for Alexander as a brilliant leader, but in the footsteps of Nazi ideology – criticises Alexander’s renunciation of his own “nationality” (“Volkstum”). On the other hand, Oertel leaves those models by praising Alexander’s efforts to get his subjects’ approval of his reign, and, at the same time, by criticising the king’s brutality and unbridled expansionism that did not take into consideration the “boundlessness” of Asia (F. Oertel, *Alexander der Große* (Kriegsvorträge der Rheinischen Friedrich-Wilhelms-Universität 107), Bonn 1943).

nen.” – Ein Brief Victor Ehrenbergs vom 20. Februar 1947”, in: *Historia* 53 (2004), 121–128; H. SCHNEIDER, “Ehrenberg, Victor”, in: P. Kuhlmann and H. Schneider (eds.), *Geschichte der Altertumswissenschaften. Biographisches Lexikon* (= Der Neue Pauly, Supplemente, VI), Stuttgart/Weimar 2012, 350–353; WIESEHÖFER, “Fritz” (n. 17) (in press)

23 For Kolbe, see H.J. RIECKENBERG, “Kolbe, Walther”, in: *Neue Deutsche Biographie (NDB)*, XII, Berlin 1980, 452–453.

24 For Stier, cf. J.-D. GAUGER, “Hans Erich Stier (1902–1979) Althistoriker, Mitgründer der CDU, Kulturpolitiker”, in: *Historisch-politische Mitteilungen. Archiv für Christlich-demokratische Politik* 14 (2007), 187–212.

25 BICHLER, “Alexander” (n. 6), 227.

26 For Oertel, see B. PALME, “Oertel, Friedrich”, in: P. Kuhlmann and H. Schneider (eds.), *Geschichte der Altertumswissenschaften. Biographisches Lexikon* (= Der Neue Pauly, Supplemente, VI), Stuttgart/Weimar 2012, 899–900.

IV

The Allied victory in 1945 forced the German Ancient Historians to revise their views of history: Fritz Schachermeyr abandoned his fundamental concerns about Alexander's policy of fusion. He now appreciated Alexander's vision of a peaceful and harmonious world state; his efforts to foster cosmopolitanism, however, came too early – when Greece was not yet ready for it (F. Schachermeyr, *Alexander der Große. Ingenium und Macht*, Graz et al. 1949, 489–496).²⁷ Helmut Berve changed some elements of his terminology, but adhered to the idea that Alexander, “with an almost religious fervour”, had pursued the idea of a fusion of the Macedonian-Iranian ruling class (H. Berve, *Griechische Geschichte*, 2nd ed., Freiburg 1951, II, 192–193.). Fritz Taeger also undertook only minor modifications to his view of Alexander (F. Taeger, *Das Altertum*, 4th ed. ff., Stuttgart 1950ff.).²⁸ Ernst Kornemann now judged the Orient more favourably, thanks to the alleged Iranian influence on it, and made Greeks and Persians alike the creators of Europe (E. Kornemann, *Weltgeschichte des Mittelmeer-Raumes. Von Philipp II. Von Makedonien bis Muhammed*, Munich 1948, I, 34–40).²⁹ Hans-Erich Stier's Alexander was changed – like his Augustus – into a veritable “World Prince of Peace” (H.-E. Stier, *Welteroberung und Weltfriede im Wirken Alexanders d.Gr.* (Rheinisch-Westfälische Akademie der Wissenschaften, Vorträge G 187), Düsseldorf 1973).³⁰ and finally, Victor Ehrenberg did indeed recognize the despotic traits in Alexander – he compared him to a “sultan” –, but he also increasingly viewed him as a “champion against nation-state restriction and racist arrogance”, as the first true cosmopolitan (V. Ehrenberg, “Alexander the Great (1941/1946)”, in: V. Ehrenberg, *Aspects of the Ancient World. Essays and Reviews*, Oxford 1946, 167–178).³¹

It were particularly members of the generation of young German or Austrian Ancient Historians who, influenced by the shocking news of the unparalleled Nazi crimes, came to a pointedly critical view of Alexander: Hermann Strasburger, persecuted because of his being a “Mischling of the first degree” as defined by the Nuremberg Laws of 1935,³² adopted a dedicated victim's perspective (H. Strasburger, “Alexanders Zug durch die gedrosische Wüste”, *Hermes* 82 (1954), 456–493); Berve's student Franz Hampl³³ saw Alexander's deeds solely determined by the king's desire to gain an until then unknown degree of power and influence (F. Hampl, *Alexander der Große*, Göttingen 1958, 81). Finally, his colleague Alfred Heuß,³⁴ also a student of Berve's, who had been a Professor in Breslau between

27 For an evaluation of Schachermeyr's turn, cf. PESDITSCHKE, *Barbar* (n. 13), I, 389–394.

28 For those modifications, cf. WIESEHÖFER, “Fritz” (n. 17) (in press).

29 Cf. A. DEMANDT, “Politische Aspekte im Alexanderbild der Neuzeit. Ein Beitrag zur historischen Methodenkritik”, in: *AKG* 54 (1972), 349.

30 BICHLER, “Wie lange” (n. 6), 227. – For a contemporaneous comment on that cf. F. HAMPL, “Alexander der Große. Persönlichkeit und historische Bedeutung”, in: F. Hampl, *Geschichte als kritische Wissenschaft*, II, Darmstadt 1975, 202–222.

31 BICHLER, “Wie lange” (n. 6), 228–229.

32 For Strasburger, see U. WALTER, U. 2012, “Strasburger, Hermann”, in: P. Kuhlmann and H. Schneider (eds.), *Geschichte der Altertumswissenschaften. Biographisches Lexikon* (= Der Neue Pauly, Supplemente, VI), Stuttgart/Weimar, 1197–1198.

33 For Hampl, see I. WEILER, “Franz Hampl”, in: R. Bichler (ed.), *100 Jahre Alte Geschichte in Innsbruck. Franz Hampl zum 75. Geburtstag*, Innsbruck 1985, 61–74.

34 For Heuß, cf. S. REBENICH, “Alfred Heuß: Ansichten seines Lebenswerkes. Mit einem Anhang: Alfred Heuß im Dritten Reich”, *Historische Zeitschrift* 271 (2000), 661–673; F. REXROTH, “Geschichte schrei-

1941 and 1945, pointed decidedly to the situatedness of any kind of Alexander reception. However, up to the 1970s, all three were still in a minority position in Germany and Austria; it was Berve, Schachermeyr and the others who set the tone.³⁵ Only in the wake of the criticism of the Vienna expatriate Ernst Badian³⁶ on previous research on Alexander³⁷, German Ancient Historians increasingly pursued a form of research that acknowledged the importance of source criticism and tried not to succumb to prevailing trends. This development is by no means over, as is clearly shown by the controversies on Alexander as “the last Achaemenid” and on-going attempts to fathom Alexander’s character and motives with the help of a rather uncritical use of the sources.³⁸

ben im Zeitalter der Extreme. Die Göttinger Historiker Percy Ernst Schramm, Hermann Heimpel und Alfred Heuß”, in: Ch. Starck and K. Schönhammer (eds.), *Die Geschichte der Akademie der Wissenschaften zu Göttingen*, I, Berlin et al. 2013, 265–299.

35 For German Ancient History after 1945, cf. R. BICHLER, “Neuorientierung in der Alten Geschichte?”, in: E. Schulz (ed.), *Deutsche Geschichtswissenschaft nach dem Zweiten Weltkrieg (1945-1965)*, Munich 1989, 63–86; S. REBENICH, “Altertumswissenschaften zwischen Kaltem Krieg und Studentenrevolution. Zur Geschichte der Mommsen-Gesellschaft von 1950 bis 1968”, *Hermes* 143 (2015), 257–287.

36 For Badian, see M. PESDITSCHKE, “Badian, Ernst”, in: P. Kuhlmann and H. Schneider (eds.), *Geschichte der Altertumswissenschaften. Biographisches Lexikon* (= Der Neue Pauly, Supplemente, VI), Stuttgart/Weimar 2012c, 44–45.

37 E. BADIEN, “Alexander the Great and the Unity of Mankind”, *Historia* 7 (1958), 425–444. – Badian’s collected essays on Alexander: E. BADIEN, *Collected Papers on Alexander the Great*, London 2012.

38 Cf. S. MÜLLER, *Alexander, Makedonien und Persien*, Berlin 2014.

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- Fig. 1: Fragment from Egypt, representing an Egyptian sacred landscape. The Pushikin State Museum of Fine Arts, no. 116.1, © 2010 Государственный музей изобразительных искусств имени А.С. Пушкина
- Fig. 2: Shallow bowl from Tresilico, representing a hunting scene. Museo Archeologico Nazionale di Reggio Calabria, no. 6171, Su concessione del Ministero dei Beni e delle Attività culturali del Turismo n. 66 del 06/09/2016 – Museo Archeologico Nazionale di Reggio Calabria
- Fig. 3: Frieze with hunting scene on the architrave of the “Tomb of Philipp II.”. From B. Tripodi, *Cacce reali macedoni: tra Alessandro I e Filippo V*, Messina: Di.Sc.A.M., Pelorias, 3, 1998, 146, fig. 8
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Philippika. Altertumswissenschaftliche Abhandlungen / Contributions to the Study of Ancient World Cultures

Herausgegeben von / Edited by Joachim Hengstl, Elizabeth Irwin, Andrea Jördens,
Torsten Mattern, Robert Rollinger, Kai Ruffing und Orell Witthuhn

99: Frederik Berger

Inszenierung der Antike

Präsentationskonzepte in öffentlichen
Antikenmuseen des 19. Jahrhunderts in
Deutschland

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„Das Bibliotheksgebäude enthält in seinen unteren Hallen wohlgeordnet Alterthümer. In anschaulicher Ordnung sind die Grabsteine römischer Soldaten aufgestellt [...]“, notierte Goethe beim Besuch der Mainzer Antikensammlung in seinen Reiseerinnerungen. Was aber bedeutet eine wohlgeordnete, anschauliche Aufstellung für einen Betrachter im frühen 19. Jahrhundert?

Frederik Berger geht dieser Frage in seiner Untersuchung zu Präsentationskonzepten in öffentlichen Antikensammlungen im Jahrhundert der Museen nach. Auf der Basis von Bild- und weit verbreiteten Textquellen wie Reiseliteratur, Museumsführern und -katalogen wird die Position der Ausstellungsbjekte im Raum rekonstruiert. So ermöglicht ein diachroner Vergleich, gezielt Änderungen zu erfassen und den Wandel in Zweck und Wahrnehmung von Antikenmuseen zu beschreiben. Gegenstand der Untersuchung sind die öffentlichen Sammlungen in Berlin, Dresden, München, Kassel, Köln, Bonn, Trier und Mainz. Dort wurden Antikenmuseen jedoch unter sehr unterschiedlichen Voraussetzungen aufgebaut, sodass der analytische Teil diese Diversität mit einer weiteren Ausdifferenzierung nach Ausstellungsgattungen und -kontexten berücksichtigt. Frederik Berger zeigt, dass es in den Ausstellungen meist eine erhebliche Divergenz zwischen dem Anspruch an das formale Ordnungskon-

zept und dessen Umsetzung gab. Zahlreiche weitere Einzelerkenntnisse zur Sammlungs- und Aufstellungsgeschichte schärfen und verschieben vielerorts das Bild, das bisher in der Forschung zur Museumsgeschichte vorherrschend war.

101: Eivind Heldaas Seland

Ships of the Desert and Ships of the Sea

Palmyra in the World Trade of the First
Three Centuries CE

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In the Roman period the world from the Atlantic Ocean to the East China Sea was tied together by ships and caravans carrying textiles, minerals, aromatics, and other valuable commodities across vast distances. In the span of three short centuries the Syrian city of Palmyra rose from unremarkable origins to assume a key role in this exchange – a position that eventually enabled her to, albeit unsuccessfully, take on the might of Rome herself. This first book-length survey of Palmyrene trade in almost four decades asks how this was possible for the people of a city that was neither on the shortest, nor on the easiest route between east and west. The study draws on the wealth of epigraphic, literary, and archaeological data handed down from the ancient city as well as the extensive scholarly tradition. This material is juxtaposed with information about the natural and geopolitical environment, ethnographic records, and network analysis, in order to explain the remarkable success of the cosmopolitan desert nomads of Palmyra.

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„Eine neue Prägung“ – so nennt Aristophanes im vom Krieg gezeichneten Athen Ende des 5. Jahrhunderts v.Chr. nicht nur die neuen Bronzemünzen, die durch einen Silberüberzug „echtes“ Geld durchschaubar imitierten. Auch neue Bürger, denen man zu viele politische Rechte eingeräumt hatte, und neue Götter, die von Intellektuellen gegen die althergebrachte athenische Religion in Stellung gebracht wurden, bezeichnete er so. Die antike Komödiensprache fand also Wege, das komplexe Zusammenspiel von Innovationen in der Münzprägung, der Politik und der Religion zu erfassen. Den zunehmend spezialisierten Altertumswissenschaften gelingt das nicht immer. Dieses Buch begibt sich auf die Spuren der attischen Komödie und übersetzt die von Aristophanes herangezogenen Metaphern in ein wissenschaftliches Programm. Es versammelt die Beiträge einer Münsteraner Tagung, die dem Problem der vielschichtigen, den Zeitgenossen nicht immer ganz geheuren Innovationskraft des Münzgeldes gewidmet war. Aus verschiedenen Perspektiven, stets jedoch anhand von konkreten Fallbeispielen, wird gezeigt, wie Münzen in der Antike als Botschafter von Innovationen dienten (und als Medium die Botschaft selbst prägten), wie sie die Entstehung neuer gesellschaftlicher Praktiken beförderten und welche – oft unvorhersehbare – Wirkungen sie auf außerökonomischen Feldern haben konnten.

104: Lajos Berkes

Dorfverwaltung und Dorfgemeinschaft in Ägypten von Diokletian zu den Abbasiden

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Hiermit wird das erste Mal eine systematische Analyse der Dorfverwaltung und der Struktur der Dorfgemeinschaft im spätantiken Ägypten vorgelegt, deren Basis mehrere Tausende neu aufgearbeitete Papyrusdokumente in verschiedenen Sprachen (Griechisch, Koptisch, teils Arabisch) bilden. Ein besonderes Forschungsproblem stellte dabei seit jeher die schwer durchschaubare Terminologie der Beamtentitel in den Dörfern dar. Ihre mikrophilologisch angelegte Untersuchung nimmt daher den größten Teil dieses Buches ein. Die anhand dessen gewonnenen Ergebnisse eröffnen dann eine übergreifende Perspektive auf die lokale Verwaltung und Gesellschaft im Übergang von der byzantinischen zur arabischen Herrschaft. Demnach wies die Verwaltungsstruktur der Dörfer ein relativ einheitliches Schema auf, wobei es gleichwohl ausgeprägte regionale Tendenzen gab. Entgegen früheren Auffassungen war das spätantike Ägypten durch starke, selbstbewusste Dorfgemeinschaften charakterisiert. Ein Vergleich der ägyptischen Evidenz mit verschiedenen Quellen aus Palästina, Syrien und Anatolien legt nahe, dass Dörfer im spätantiken östlichen Mittelmeerraum nach ähnlichen Prinzipien organisiert waren.

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